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To

Dr A. V. Williamson

with the best regards of his

obliged friend

J. J. Audubon



The Library, Mr Everett's residence, Boston

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HOMES

OF

AMERICAN AUTHORS.



G. P. PUTNAM & CO., 10 PARK PLACE.

HOMES

OF

AMERICAN AUTHORS;

COMPRISING

Anecdotical, Personal, and Descriptive Sketches,

BY

VARIOUS WRITERS.

ILLUSTRATED WITH VIEWS OF THEIR RESIDENCES FROM ORIGINAL DRAWINGS, AND A FAC-SIMILE OF THE MANUSCRIPT OF EACH AUTHOR.

NEW-YORK:
G. P. PUTNAM AND CO., 10 PARK PLACE.
M.DCCC.LIII.



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PREFACE.

THE absence of a good many names from this volume, which will be very naturally looked for in any collection of American Authors, making the slightest pretensions to completeness, will, of course, be a subject of remark, and demands an explanation.

On making up a list of the authors in whom the public were imagined to feel a sufficient degree of interest to entitle them to a place in a work like this, they were found to be too numerous to be all included in one volume. Moreover, as it required a considerable length of time to procure drawings of their homes, it would have caused the publication to be delayed nearly a year, if an attempt had been made to put them all between the same pair of covers. It was determined, therefore, to divide our

Valhalla into two compartments, and to avoid the appearance of partiality, and give equal value to both, some of the greater names have been reserved for our second volume, which it is intended to publish the succeeding year.

Although there are no Abbotsfords, which have been reared from the earnings of the pen, among our authors' homes, yet we feel a degree of pride in showing our countrymen how comfortably housed many of their favorite authors are, in spite of the imputed neglect with which native talent has been treated. Authorship in America, notwithstanding the want of an international copy-right which has been so sorely felt by literary laborers, has at last become a profession which men may live by.

All the views in this volume have been engraved from original drawings made expressly for the work, with the exception of Otsego Hall, the residence of Cooper, and Mr. Webster's residence at Marshfield, which are from daguerreotypes, and not less authentic than the others.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON,..... 1

JAMES K. PAULDING,..... 21

WASHINGTON IRVING,..... 35

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT,..... 65

GEORGE BANCROFT,..... 85

RICHARD HENRY DANA,..... 103

WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT,..... 123

MISS C. M. SEDGWICK,..... 159

J. FENIMORE COOPER,..... 179

EDWARD EVERETT,..... 217

RALPH WALDO EMERSON,..... 233

WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS,..... 257

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW,..... 265

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE,..... 291
DANIEL WEBSTER,..... 317
JOHN PENDLETON KENNEDY,..... 341
JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL,..... 347

CONTRIBUTORS.

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ILLUSTRATIONS.

On Steel.

	ARTIST.	ENGRAVER.	PAGE.
EVERETT'S LIBRARY.	H. BILLINGS.	J. ROGERS.	Frontispiece.
PORTRAIT OF WASHINGTON IRVING.	C. MARTIN.	F. HALPIN.	35
IRVING'S RESIDENCE, SUNNY-SIDE.	W. R. MILLER,	H. JORDAN.	50
BRYANT'S RESIDENCE, ROSLYN.	W. R. MILLER,	J. B. FORREST.	68
ROUNDHILL, NORTHAMPTON.	DAGUERREOTYPE.	J. A. ROLPH.	96
RESIDENCE OF R. H. DANA.	H. BILLINGS.	L. V. HUNT.	103
PRESCOTT'S RESIDENCE, PEPPERELL.	ORIGINAL SKETCH.	L. KIRK.	150
RESIDENCE OF MISS C. M. SEDGWICK.	ORIGINAL SKETCH.	L. KIRK.	168
PORTRAIT OF J. FENIMORE COOPER.	DAGUERREOTYPE.	H. B. HALL.	179
OTSEGO HALL, COOPERSTOWN.	DAGUERREOTYPE.	H. B. HALL.	203
PORTRAIT OF EDWARD EVERETT.	R. M. STAGG.	J. CHENEY.	228
EMERSON'S HOUSE AT CONCORD.	MILLER.	J. B. FORREST.	244
SIMMS' HOUSE AT WOODLANDS.	RICHARDS.	L. V. HUNT.	257
CRAGIE HOUSE, CAMBRIDGE.	H. BILLINGS.	L. V. HUNT.	280
PORTRAIT OF N. HAWTHORNE.	C. G. THOMPSON.	T. PHILLIBROWN.	304
HAWTHORNE'S HOUSE AT CONCORD.	W. K. MILLER.	J. DUTHIE.	366
WEBSTER'S HOUSE, MARSHFIELD.	DAGUERREOTYPE.	H. B. HALL.	336
KENNEDY'S RESIDENCE.	D. H. STROTHER.	W. L. ORMSBY.	341
LOWELL'S HOUSE, CAMBRIDGE.	H. BILLINGS.	W. L. ORMSBY.	349

On Wood.

AUDUBON'S RESIDENCE.	W. R. MILLER.	RICHARDSON, & COX.	3
PAULDING'S RESIDENCE.	"	"	21
IRVING'S RESIDENCE. GENERAL VIEW.	"	"	35

	ARTIST.	ENGRAVER.	PAGE.
SLEEPY HOLLOW.	W. R. Miller.	Richardson, & Cox.	49
RUSTIC GATE, AT SUNNYSIDE. . .	"	"	61
BRYANT'S HOUSE, ROSLYN. . . .	"	"	65
PRESCOTT'S HOUSE AT NAHANT. . .		"	123
" " " BOSTON. . .		"	128
COOPER'S HOUSE, WESTCHESTER CO. .	Richards.	"	179
BIRTH-PLACE OF EVERETT. . . .		"	217
ALCOTT'S SUMMER HOUSE. . . .		"	233
BIRTH-PLACE OF PROF. LONGFELLOW.		"	265
THE "OLD MANSE," CONCORD. . .		"	291
BIRTH-PLACE OF DANIEL WEBSTER.	C. Lanman.	"	317
ARMS OF THE LOWELL FAMILY. .		"	366

Fac-Similes of Manuscripts.

AUDUBON.	Journal in Canada.	16
IRVING.	Knickerbocker.	60
BRYANT.	The "Past."	80
BANCROFT.	History of United States. Vol. V. .	100
DANA.	Domestic Life.	120
PRESCOTT.	Conquest of Peru.	156
SEDGWICK.	New-England Tale.	176
COOPER.	Agreement for "Spy." . . .	214
EVERETT.	Oration at Niblo's.	230
EMERSON.	Nature.	254
SIMMS.	The Sword and Distaff.	262
LONGFELLOW.	Midnight Mass.	286
HAWTHORNE.	Scarlet Letter.	312
WEBSTER.	Oration at the Capitol. . . .	338
KENNEDY.	Horse-Shoe Robinson.	346
LOWELL.	Fable for Critics.	366

John James Audubon.



AUDUBON.

ONE Sunday, as bright and brilliant a day as ever gladdened the eyesight, or sent thrilling pulses of health through the outworn body, I wandered, as it was then my habit, beyond the outskirts of New-York. My road led me past several suburban houses, pleasantly rising amid their green groves, and along the banks of the Hudson. A sacred silence was brooding every where, as if Nature, sympathizing with the solemn offices of the day, had consecrated an hour to meditation. Behind me lay the town with its masses of

perpetual unquiet life; before me the sloops with their white wings were floating lazily on the surface of the stream; while all around were the green fields and the cheering sunshine. Those squads of boisterous strollers who usually select that day for the invasion of the sylvan solitudes, were not yet abroad, and only the insects with their small hum, or the birds with their sweet morning hymns, seemed to be alive in the midst of the infinite repose.

After wandering for some hours, I turned into a rustic road which led directly down towards the river. A noble forest was planted on the one side of it, and on the other vast grain-fields lay laughing in the sun, or listening to the complacent murmur of a brook that stole along in the midst of clumps of bushes and wild briers. About the half-worn path groups of cattle loitered, some cropping the young grass, and others looking contemplatively towards the distant shine of the stream, which flashed through the vista of trees in molten bands of silver. It was such a scene as Cuyp or Paul Potter would have loved to paint, if the native country of those artists had ever furnished them with so lovely and glorious a subject.

But my walk soon brought a secluded country house into view,—a house not entirely adapted to the nature of the scenery, yet simple and unpretending in its architecture, and beautifully embowered amid elms and oaks. Several graceful fawns, and a noble elk, were stalking in the shade of the trees, apparently unconscious of the presence of a few dogs, and not caring for the numerous turkeys, geese, and other domestic animals that gabbled and screamed around them. Nor did my own approach startle the wild beautiful crea-

tures that seemed as docile as any of their tame companions.

"Is the master at home?" I asked of a pretty maid-servant who answered my tap at the door, and who after informing me that he was, led me into a room on the left side of the broad hall. It was not, however, a parlor, or an ordinary reception-room that I entered, but evidently a room for work. In one corner stood a painter's easel, with a half-finished sketch of a beaver on the paper; in the other lay the skin of an American panther. The antlers of elks hung upon the walls; stuffed birds of every description of gay plumage ornamented the mantle-piece; and exquisite drawings of field-mice, orioles, and wood-peckers, were scattered promiscuously in other parts of the room, across one end of which a long rude table was stretched to hold artist materials, scraps of drawing-paper, and immense folio volumes, filled with delicious paintings of birds taken in their native haunts.

This, said I to myself, is the studio of the naturalist, but hardly had the thought escaped me, when the master himself made his appearance. He was a tall, thin man, with a high arched and serene forehead, and a bright penetrating gray eye; his white locks fell in clusters upon his shoulders, but were the only signs of age, for his form was erect, and his step as light as that of a deer. The expression of his face was sharp, but noble and commanding, and there was something in it, partly derived from the aquiline nose and partly from the shutting of the mouth, which made you think of the imperial eagle.

His greeting, as he entered, was at once frank and cordial,

and showed you the sincere true man. "How kind it is," he said with a slight French accent, and in a pensive tone, "to come to see me; and how wise, too, to leave that crazy city!" He then shook me warmly by the hand. "Do you know," he continued, "how I wonder that men can consent to swelter and fret their lives away amid those hot bricks and pestilent vapors, when the woods and fields are all so near? It would kill me soon to be confined in such a prison-house; and when I am forced to make an occasional visit there, it fills me with loathing and sadness. Ah! how often when I have been abroad on the mountains has my heart risen in grateful praise to God that it was not my destiny to waste and pine among those noisome congregations of the city."

This man was Audubon, the ornithologist, whose extraordinary adventures in the pursuit of a favorite science, whose simple manly character, and whose unequalled accuracy and skill as an artist in a peculiar walk, has made his name known to the civilized world.

He was over sixty years of age when the writer of this sketch made his acquaintance, and he was then as ardent in the prosecution of his studies, as bold in his projects for additional acquisitions, and as animated in his conversation and manner, as he could have been forty years before. Indeed, he was even at that advanced period of his life on the eve of an excursion to the Rocky Mountains, in search of some specimens of wild animals of which he had heard, and the following year he passed the summer on the upper Missouri and the Yellow Stone rivers. His love of his vocation, after innumerable trials, successes and disappointments, gave the

lie to the *Quo fit Mæcenas* of Horace, and was to the end of his life most intense.

Audubon was born the same year the Declaration of Independence was made (1776), on a plantation in Louisiana, then a French possession, where his father, a retired and cultivated French naval officer, had settled, and where, under the instruction of that excellent parent, he acquired as a mere child his love for natural objects. As early as he could remember, he says, he took an interest in the animal creation, and because he could not be always with the birds, he brought the birds to him, as well as he could, by taking their portraits, in a rude uninstructed way.

The young naturalist was sent to France to perfect his skill. In Paris, he took lessons of David, but soon grew weary of the task, and longed to return once more to his native woods. "What had I to do," he asked, "with monstrous torsos and the heads of heathen gods, when my business lay among the birds?" Sure enough; and, accordingly, the student made his way back to the fields. He took possession of a farm on the banks of the Schuylkill, in Pennsylvania, which had been given to him by his father, and here the taste thus early developed became the master passion of his life. He continued his researches and his drawings; but let it here be said, for the encouragement of youthful genius, that those drawings did not then display the excellence which marked his subsequent efforts.

It was not long after that he was married to a woman in every way adapted to his elevated taste,—one who appreciated his genius and sympathized in his pursuits; and with her, the better to pursue his studies, he removed to a residence

he had purchased at Henderson, Kentucky. He gives a graphic account of his first journey to that new home, which was then distant and desolate. Steamboats had not yet vexed the placid waters of the Ohio, to drive away the flat-boat and the canoe, and the shores were still covered with a luxuriant virgin vegetation. Unbroken thickets, enormous trees, endless reaches of forests rose on all sides, and where populous cities now send up their noise and smoke, the vultures screamed from the hill-tops, and savage animals came down to the openings to drink. But all this only made the region more inviting to the young voyager, and he penetrated the vast solitudes with a sprightly eager joy. It was precisely amid the rich and varied magnificence of nature that he hoped to find those winged treasures for which his soul yearned. Creation in her fullness and glory was there, and he only longed to bathe in her luxuriance.

Once settled in his rustic western dwelling, Audubon made wide and frequent excursions, not merely into all parts of the neighboring country, but over much of our whole broad inland. Provided with a rough leathern dress, with a knapsack that contained his pencils and his colors, and with a good trusty gun at his side, he wandered for days, and even months, in search of animals to describe and paint. At one time, we find him watching for hours in the tangled cane-breaks of Kentucky, where some shy songster is silently rearing her brood; at another, he is seen scaling the almost inaccessable mountains, where the eagle hovers over its rocky nest; now he is floating in a frail skiff down the rushing tide of the Mississippi, and is carried on he knows not whither by the flood; then the jealous Indian prowls about his lonely path,

or lurks beneath the trees on which he sleeps, waiting for an opportunity to put an end to his life and his uncomprehended labors together; here he begs shelter and food in some lonely log-cabin of the frontiers,—and there he wanders hopelessly through the interminable pine-barrens of Florida, while hunger, and heat and thirst, and insects and wild beasts, beleaguer his steps like so many persecuting spirits. But wherever he is, whatever lot betides,—in difficulty and danger, as well as in the glow of discovery and success, the same high genial enthusiasm warms him, the same unfaltering purpose sustains and fortifies his soul. The hero on the battle-field never marched to victory more firmly than he marched to the conquests of science and art. What opulent experiences, what varieties and revulsions of feeling, what dread despairs and exulting hopes were involved in that long solitary career? We fancy that we who live amid the incessant whirl of our straining civilization, who are caught up and borne onward by its manifold warring streams of trade, politics, amusement, and frivolity, that we know something of life; but that wandering naturalist, I take it, had excitements in his lonely life to which our strongest anxieties would be tame. The spirit in solitude is brought face to face with realities more awful and stern than death, and therefore it is that the sea, the desert, the still endless wood, when we are alone with them, move our profoundest and saddest emotions.

It was curious to observe the influence which this life had exerted upon the mind and character of Audubon. Withdrawing him from the conventionalities and cares of a more social condition, he always retained the fresh, spontaneous, elastic manner of a child, yet his constant and deep conversa-

tion with the thoughtful mysteries of nature, had imparted to him also the reflective wisdom of the sage. Whatever came into his mind he uttered with delightful unreserve and naiveté; but those utterances at the same time bore marks of keen original insight, and of the deepest knowledge. Thus, he knew nothing of the theology of the schools, and cared as little for it, because the untaught theology of the woods had filled his mind with a nobler sense of God than the schoolmen had ever dreamed; he knew, too, nothing of our politics, and cared nothing for them, because to his simple integrity they seemed only frivolous and vain debates about rights that none disputed, and duties that all fulfilled: and his reading, confined, I suspect, mainly to the necessary literature of his profession, was neither extensive nor choice, because he found in his own activity, earnestness and invention, a fountain-head of literature, abundantly able to supply all his intellectual and spiritual wants. The heroism and poetry of his own life gave him no occasion to learn the heroism and poetry of others; yet his apparent neglect of the "humanities" had wrought no hardening or vulgarizing effect upon his nature, for his sympathies were always the most delicate, and his manners soft, gentle and refined.

After years of labor some of his drawings were shown by him to Lawson, who engraved designs for the works of Lucien Bonaparte, Prince of Musignano, but they were rejected by Lawson as quite impossible to be engraved!

Nothing daunted by this repulse, Audubon at length proceeded to England. He relates with the utmost simplicity that on going to Europe, he trod its busy cities more desolate of heart amid their throngs than he had ever been

in the woods, and fancied that no one of all the driving multitudes there would know or care about the unfriended backwoodsman, who came without acquaintances and without introduction, to solicit their hospitality and aid. But what was his surprise and delight to find that at Edinburgh he was generously welcomed by Jeffrey, Wilson, and Sir Walter Scott, while at Paris, Cuvier, St. Hilaire and Humboldt (whom, by the way, he had once casually met in America) were proud to call him friend. The learned societies hastened to greet him with their first academical honors, and he was introduced as a companion and peer among men eminent in all walks of literature and art, whose names are illustrious and venerable in both hemispheres. No painful quarantine of hope deferred, as too often falls to the lot of genius, was appointed to his share, — no protracted poverty withered and cut short his labors. The result was a work on Ornithology, — with splendid volumes of paintings, illustrated in the letter-press with animated descriptions and lively incidents of personal adventure. When it was published, it at once established his fame abroad, and though he knew it not, gave him a high reputation at home. But besides the willing and instant applause he received, it should be said that of the one hundred and seventy subscribers to his book, at one thousand dollars each, nearly half came from England and France. This testimony to his merit was as honorable to those who gave it as it was to him who received it, and must have largely compensated him — not for the expense, which we will not mention here — but for the trouble and pain of his almost miraculous exertions.

After a few years he returned to America to enrich his portfolios and journals with materials for other volumes of what he characteristically named his "Ornithological Biography." No term could have been more happily chosen to designate both his paintings and descriptions, for both are actual histories of their objects. A faithful portrait or transcript of the form and plumage of his aërial friends was not all that he desired to accomplish, as if they had no lives of their own and no relations to the rest of nature, and sat for ever, melancholy and alone, like the stock-dove of the poet, brooding over their own sweet notes. He wished to portray them in their actual habitudes and localities, such as he had found them for years in their homes. Knowing how they were reared and mated and made a living, how each one had its individualities of character and custom, how its motions and postures and migrations were as much a part of its history as its structure and hue, and how the food it fed upon, as well as the trees on which it built, were important elements in the knowledge of it, as a fact of creation, he strove to represent each in its most characteristic and striking peculiarities and ways. And by this means he obtained another end, beyond strict fidelity to the truth of things, in that rich variety of accessories, which is essential to picturesque effect.

This was not, however, a success that in any degree intoxicated his mind, for no sooner had he finally returned home, crowned with fame and easy in fortune, than he resumed his arduous tasks. His was not a nature that could be content with reposing upon laurels. On the contrary, an incessant activity was the law of life. If any thing could have tempted

him into the indolence of a comfortable retirement, it was the charm of his happy family, where, surrounded by his accomplished wife and sons, blessed with competence, and enjoying general respect, he could have whiled away the evening of his days in security, peace and affection. But stronger than these to him were the seductions of the fields, and that nameless restless impulse which ever forces men of genius along their peculiar paths. He was soon again immersed in preparations for his perilous journeys, and set out upon them with as much hopefulness and joy as had ever marked his earlier days.

Those who have turned over the leaves of Audubon's large books, or better still, who remember to have seen the collected exhibition he once made in the Lyceum of this city, will recall with grateful feeling the advantages of his method. They will remember how that vast and brilliant collection made it appear to the spectator as if he had been admitted at once to all sylvan secrets, or at least that the gorgeous infinity of the bird-world had been revealed to him in some happy moment of nature's confidence. All the gay denizens of the air were there, — some alone on swaying twigs of the birch or maple, or on bending ferns and spires of grass; others in pairs tenderly feeding their young with gaudy or green insects, or in groups pursuing their prey or defending themselves from attack; while others again clove the thin air of the hills or flitted darkly through secluded brakes. All were alive, — all graceful, — all joyous. It was impossible not to feel among them that there was something in birds which brought them nearer to our affection than the rest of the animal tribes; for while these are either indifferent

to us, or inimical, or mere "servile ministers," birds are ever objects of admiration and solicitude. No body loves or even so much as likes insects, or reptiles, or worms; fishes have an unutterably stupid and unsentimental look, and deserve to be caught; wild beasts, though sometimes savagely grand and majestic, are always dreadful, and tame beasts we subjugate and therefore despise; but birds win their way to our hearts and imaginations by a thousand ties. They are lovely in their forms and fascinating in their habits. They have canny knowing eyes, they have wonderfully pretty and brilliant hues, their motions are the perfection of beauty, and they lead free, happy, melodious lives. Their swift and graceful evolutions, now rising like an arrow to the very gate of heaven, and anon outspeeding the wind as it curls the white caps of the ocean, and above all, their far off mysterious flights in the drear autumn, awaken aspiration and thought, and breed a vague mysterious human interest in their destinies, while their songs, profuse, varied, sparkling, sympathetic, glorious, filling the world with melody, are the richest and tenderest of nature's voices. Among the recollections of childhood, those of the birds we have fed and cherished are often the sweetest, and in maturer years the country-home we love, the nooks where we have meditated, or the field in which we have worshipped, are the greener and the dearer for the memory of the birds. Thus they are associated with the most charming features of the external world, and breathe a spell over the interior world of thought. They are the poetry of nature, and at the same time a pervading presence of poetry. Shakspeare, Keats, Shelley, Burns, Bryant and Wordsworth are their laureates, and while language lasts we

shall hear an echo of their strains in the cadences of "immortal verse."

In this view of the matter, Audubon needs no apology for his life-long devotion to birds, or for the affectionate interest he every where manifests in his writings about them. It must not be understood that he was exclusive in his attachments, for besides the nomenclature and scientific descriptions of his volumes, there are delightful episodes on natural scenery, local character and amusements, anecdotes of adventure, and sketches of the grander phenomena of winds and floods. In one place he tells us of an earthquake he experienced, in another of a fearful tempest, next of the hospitality of old friends suddenly and strangely found in a secluded corner of Canada, then of a ball in Newfoundland or of a Barbacue in Kentucky, and anon we are initiated into the mysteries of the maple-sugar camp, or stand appalled at the inhuman feats of the wreckers of the Florida reefs. His style, sometimes a little too ambitious and diffuse, is always vivacious and clear. The slight vein of egotism that runs through his interludes, gives an added charm to them, while, whatever his theme or your own mood, there is an impetuous bounding enthusiasm in all that he says,—a strain of exuberant and exulting animal spirits, that carries you whither he wills. A sedate, restrained, dyspeptic manner would have been impossible in one writing as he did in all the freshness of inspiration, and in the immediate presence of his objects.

When Audubon had completed his various ornithologies, he projected, with the aid of the Rev. Dr. Bachman, his firm friend, the well-known geologist, a similar work in respect to

the quadrupeds. Indeed he had already, in his previous wanderings, accumulated a large mass of materials, and was only anxious to complete his design. But the approach of age, —he was then nearly seventy,—induced his friends to dissuade him from some of the more toilsome and hazardous expeditions necessary to complete this undertaking. He therefore left a portion of it to Dr. Bachman and to his sons, who inherit much of his talent.

Before this second great undertaking was accomplished the over-wrought constitution had began to fail, the powers of both mind and body were exhausted—the once brilliant eye could no longer keenly inspect the minute and delicate organs of the smaller quadrupeds or birds, nor could the once firm hand trace aught but trembling lines. We have heard that the last gleam of light stole across his features a few days before his death, when one of his sons held before him, as he sat in his chair, some of his most cherished drawings.

He died on the 27th of January, 1851, gently as a child composes himself to his beautiful sleep. Without show, or the least attempt at parade of any kind, his remains were attended to their resting-place in Trinity Cemetery, adjoining his residence, by his family and a few friends. But in a short space of time the decease of this great, though simple-hearted man, was known both throughout our own broad land and Europe.

I cannot but think that his countrymen made too little account of his death. It was perhaps, however, not to be expected that the multitude, who knew nothing of his services, should pay him their tributes of gratitude and respect,

Audubon. Mss. Journal through British Provinces.

Audubons Journal. — Thinking it worth while to keep a Journal of
the following anecdote I have written it as I have it
from an eccentric Gentleman I gave it a fair hearing.
"Well hunting one day (said he to me) I came across a Wood duck
Called here by the Names of Summer Duck, Squealer, &c. &c. I kept from my
Master with a grumpy (or any thing else) — I kept from my
horse Friday well aware that I would prevail at least one or two
of the Ducklings, but I was mistaken for the Dam other Duck
made have fastened on my intentions, ran round & round her young
urging them toward a hole beneath a rock with so much
Charity, energy I may call it, that ere I could lay hold of one
single one of the progeny, the last Mammal under the sod in a
which the Pitching horse and left me gazing in front of the
Well known retreat. — Mist Nature Said I even in these Circumstances
has granted such Means as will enable the Mother to preserve
of our species!" — How cries any Naturalist on hearing the Name
I have seen Jim this Common American Marmot of
all Sizes and I might Say of all grades of Colour, from pure
albinos pure black to a bright Orange even Cinnamon, to yet
they were all of the same Species, with a simple additional
of a pouch as described of the Suslik &c. &c. Spetra of
Doc. Richardson & others. — I have the last to differ also
in length & size as I have from the Parisian Skins of Mice
to differ in the same Species. — So farewell Audubon, Expetria!

but it was to be supposed that our scientific societies and our artist associations would at least propose a monument to one who was so rare an ornament to both. Yet if they were neglectful, there are those who will not be, and who will long cherish his name: and, in the failure of all human memorials, as it has been elsewhere said, the little wren will whisper it about our homes, the robin and the reed-bird pipe it from the meadows, the ring-dove will coo it from the dewy depths of the woods, and the mountain eagle scream it to the stars.

James K. Paulding.



PAULDING.

TO those critics, at home and abroad, who deny that there is any essential nationality in our literature, we commend the works of Paulding. The oldest of our living authors, and after Brockden Brown, the first to make a creditable mark in our literary history, every thing he has written is not only American in subject and material, but as thoroughly imbued with the national spirit as any such body of works that ever proceeded from the brain and heart of a patriot. It is half a century since he made his first

appearance in print, and at seventy-five he continues to write with the vivacity, good sense, and earnest love of country, for which he has been distinguished from the beginning.

Before proceeding with a description of the residence of the veteran novelist, let us briefly sketch the life which is drawing to its close in a place so congenial and beautiful.

Mr. Paulding is of the old Dutch stock, and of a family ennobled by sacrifices when sacrifices were the seals of devotion to liberty. It has been stated that he was born in Pawling, on the Hudson, so named in honor of one of his ancestors, who spelt his name in this way; but his real birth-place was Pleasant Valley, a town in the same vicinity, where he came into the world on the twenty-second of August, 1778. His father was a member of the first New-York Committee of Safety, and Commissary General of the State troops; and a cousin — the son of his father's elder brother — was John Paulding, who assisted in the capture of Andre.

While the army was suffering from cold and hunger in the Highlands, from the inability of Congress to afford adequate supplies, Commissary Paulding on his own responsibility furnished the necessary means for their subsistence. When the war was over he presented his account for adjustment at the office of the Auditor General; it was refused, and he returned to his family ruined in fortune, to be thrown into prison by a public creditor. His confinement was at length ended by the burning of the prison, after which he was permitted to walk unmolested to his home,

where the remainder of his life was passed in poverty and such depression as might well be induced by a recollection of his wrongs and sufferings.

This brief notice of the father furnishes an index to the early life of our author. He was the youngest son, and his elder brothers being compelled to go from home in order to make their way in the world, he was left without associates to wile away his boyhood in the reading of such books as were in the family library, or could be borrowed in the neighborhood. Country houses, in those days, were not filled with the vagabond literature which cloys, weakens and depraves the mind of the now rising generation. The works apt to be found in them were standard travels, biographies, histories, essays, and treatises in practical religion, and they were rarely too numerous to be well digested during a studious minority, to the great advantage of one's intellectual health and character. Thus, in the society of his mother, and without further instruction than could be obtained at a little log school-house about two miles away, in listless and dreamy solitude passed the early years of the author of "The Dutchman's Fireside," till with the assistance of one of his brothers he obtained a place in a public office in New-York.

His sister had married Mr. Peter Irving, a merchant of high character, afterward well known as a representative of the city in Congress, and through him he became acquainted with his younger brother, Washington Irving, with whom he contracted at once an intimate and lasting friendship. They had written some trifles for the gazettes—Paulding a few hits at the follies of society, and Irving his "Oliver Old-

style" essays, — and, meeting one evening at a party, it was proposed in a gay conversation to establish a periodical in which to lash and amuse the town. When they next met each had prepared an introductory paper, and as both had some points too good to be sacrificed, they were blended into one, Paulding's serving as the basis. They adopted the title of "Salmagundi," and soon after published a small edition of their first number, little thinking of the extraordinary success which awaited it. The work had a great deal of freshness; its humor, though unequal, was nearly always lively and piquant, and as its satire was general, every body was pleased. Its reception perhaps determined the subsequent devotion of the authors to literature. The publisher found it profitable, as he paid nothing for the copyright, and on his refusal to make any remuneration for it, with the completion of the second volume it was suspended.

In the following half dozen years Mr. Paulding attended to business and cultivated the increasing and brilliant society of wits and men of genius then growing up in the city; and in 1813, having in the mean while written occasionally for the magazines, he printed his next book, "The Lay of a Scotch Fiddle," a satirical poem, and "Jokeby," a burlesque of "Rokeby," in six cantos; and in the succeeding spring "The United States and England," in reply to an attack on C. J. Ingersoll's "Inchiquin Letters," in the Quarterly Review. "The Diverting History of John Bull and Brother Jonathan," the most successful of his satires, appeared in 1816. The allegory is well sustained, and the style has a homely simplicity and vigor that remind us of Swift. A part of this year was passed in Virginia, where he wrote his

"Letters from the South," published in 1817. The humor in them is not in his happiest vein, and the soundness of some views here displayed respecting education, paper currency, and other subjects, may be questioned; but the volumes contain many interesting sketches of scenery, manners, and personal character, and, with his previous writings, they commended him to the notice of President Madison, who became his warm friend, and secured for him, on the close of the war with England, the secretaryship of the Board of Navy Commissioners, which he held — as may be stated here — until he was made Navy Agent in New-York, which office he resigned, after twelve years, to enter the cabinet of President Van Buren.

In 1818 he published "The Backwoodsman," a descriptive poem, and in the next year the second series of "Salmagundi," of which he was the sole author. "Koningsmarke, or Old Times in the New World," a novel founded on incidents in the early history of Swedish settlements on the Delaware, appeared in 1823; "John Bull in America" in 1824; and "Merry Tales of the Three Wise Men of Gotham" in 1826. The idea that the progress of mankind is more apparent than actual, is a favorite one with him, and modern improvements, and discoveries in political economy and productive labor, and new theories of philosophy, are here ingeniously ridiculed. "The Book of St. Nicholas," a collection of stories purporting to be translated from the Dutch, "The New Pilgrim's Progress," containing some of the best specimens of his satire, and "Tales of a Good Woman, by a Doubtful Gentleman," came out in the three following years.

The best of Mr. Paulding's novels, "The Dutchman's Fireside," was published in 1831, and it was immediately and decidedly successful. It is a domestic story of the time of the "old French war;" the scenes are among the sources of the Hudson, on the borders of Lake Champlain, and in other parts of the province of New-York; the characters are natural and distinctly drawn, and from the outset the reader feels that each one of them is a personal acquaintance. One of the most cleverly executed is a meddling little old Dutchman, Ariel Van Cour, who with the best intentions is continually working mischief—an every-day sort of person, nowhere else so palpably embodied. The hero, Sybrant Van Cour, is educated in almost total seclusion, and finds himself on the verge of manhood, a scholar, ignorant of the world, proud, sensitive and suspicious, unhappy, and a cause of unhappiness to all about him. His transformation is effected by the famous Sir William Johnson, whom he accompanies on a campaign, and in the end, a self-confident and self-complacent gentleman, he marries a woman whom he had loved all the while, but whom his infirmities had previously rendered as wretched as himself. The work is marked throughout with the author's quaint and peculiar humor, and it is a delightful picture of primitive colonial life, varied with glimpses of the mimic court of the governor, where ladies figure in hoops and brocades, and of the camp in the wilderness, and the strategy of Indian warfare.

In the following year he published "Westward Ho!" the moral of which story is, that we are to disregard the presentiments of evil, withstand the approaches of fanaticism, and feel confident that the surest means of inducing

a gracious interposition of Providence in our favor, is to persevere ourselves in all the kindly offices of humanity toward the unfortunate. The characters are boldly and skilfully drawn: the Virginia planter who squanders his estate in a prodigal hospitality and with the remnants of a liberal fortune seeks a new home in untried forests, Zeno and Judith Paddock, a pair of village inquisitors, and Bushfield, an untamed western hunter, are all actual and indigenous beings. He had already sketched the Kentuckian, with a freer but less skilful hand, in his comedy of Nimrod Wildfire. Whoever wanders in the footsteps of Daniel Boone will still meet with Bushfields, though until he approaches nearer the Rocky Mountains the rough edges of the character may be somewhat softened down; and Dangerfields are not yet strangers in Virginia.

His next work was on "Slavery in the United States," an unhesitating defence of the institution against every sort of religious, moral and economical attacks; and this was followed in 1835 by his admirable "Life of Washington," addressed to the youth of the country, and constituting the most just and attractive personal history of the great chief ever written.

Retiring from public life in 1841, after having served four years as Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Paulding at the age of sixty-three resumed his pen, and some of his magazine papers produced since that time are equal to any of the compositions of his most vigorous days. In 1846 he published a new novel, "The Old Continental," which is distinguished for all his peculiarities of manner and spirit, and in 1850 his last novel "The Puritan's Daughter."

The works here enumerated fill twenty-seven volumes, and half a dozen more might be made of his miscellaneous tales, essays, ballads, and other contributions to the periodicals, constituting perhaps the most popular as well as characteristic portion of his writings.

As we have said, he is a national author: he has little respect for authority unsupported by reason, but on all subjects has thought and judged for himself; he has defended our government and institutions and embodied what is peculiar in our manners and opinions, and there is scarcely a person in all his dramas who would not in any country be instantly recognized as an American. He is unequalled in a sort of quaint and whimsical humor, but occasionally falls into coarseness, and the unnecessary habit of labelling his characters, as if doubtful of their possessing sufficient individuality to be otherwise distinguishable. But the motley crowds at our watering-places, the ridiculous extravagance and ostentation of the suddenly made rich, the ascendency of pocket over brain in affairs of love, and all the fopperies and follies of our mimic worlds, are described by him in a most diverting manner, while he treats the more serious sins of society with an appropriate severity.

The residence of Mr. Paulding, of which a sketch is presented at the beginning of this chapter, is situated on the east bank of the Hudson, about eight miles above the town of Poughkeepsie, in the county of Duchess, and the farm he now occupies is part of the grant of a manor by William the Third to one of his ancestors. This property has long since been divided into smaller portions among a succession of proprietors, and the only part now in pos-

session of the family is that occupied by Mr. Paulding, who purchased it about ten years ago.

The house is on a natural terrace, whence descends an undulating lawn of some twenty or twenty-five acres, to the river, which is nearly a quarter of a mile distant, and about a mile wide. The whole farm is singularly picturesque, being entirely in grass, with the exception of the garden, and numerous copses and clumps of wood, planted by the hand of Nature, and displaying some of her most happy combinations and diversities.

The view from the piazza presents a variety of lake scenery — the river being occasionally intercepted by projecting points and graceful curves, that for a little space hide its course. Looking to the southwest and west, the eye rests on the opposite shores of the river, which rise at first abruptly, sometimes in rocky precipices, crowned by a rich slope of cultivated land sprinkled with country-seats and farm-houses, and reaching the base of a range of wood-crowned mountains, which ends, nearly opposite the house, in a high bluff, resembling in outline and magnitude Anthony's Nose, in the Highlands below. Beyond this, and between another range of hills, opens a vista of some twenty miles, terminated by the Shawangunk mountains.

Towards the north, looking from the piazza over a rich undulating country, occasionally rising into considerable hills, the prospect is closed by the Catskill Mountains, which are seen, from the base to the summits, in all their Alpine features and graceful outlines, at a distance of some twenty or thirty miles. A little rocky island, covered with evergreens, and about half a mile in length, lies

in the centre of the river, and adds to the beauty of the scenery.

Here, surrounded by a growing family of grandchildren, Mr. Paulding has resided the last ten years, during which time he has visited the city but once, to attend the marriage of a relation. He has retired from the world, not in disgust or disappointment, for it has always treated him better than he deserved, he says, but because he is of opinion that at seventy-five men are generally more fit for contemplation than for action, and better qualified to benefit the world by their precepts than their example, that at this age a man should consider the balancing of old accounts rather than the opening of new ones, and that the traveller so near his journey's end should prepare for putting up for the night.

Still in conversing with him we observe that he feels a profound interest in the general welfare, that he has not outlived that ardent love of country which glows in all his writings, and what perhaps is more remarkable, that he continues to cherish an almost youthful feeling for the beauties of nature by which he is surrounded. In pleasant weather he occupies himself every day an hour or two in working on his farm — of course not in very laborious duties — but the greater portion of his time is spent in reading and writing, as he says, not so much with a view to become wiser or to enlighten others as to relieve himself from two of the heaviest burdens of life — old age and unoccupied time.

The veteran *litterateur* we find, like most persons who have long passed the meridian of life, is a staunch conservative, even less indulgent of all the pretences of progress

than when he wrote the history of the "Seven Wise Men of Gotham." The world he thinks is quite as apt to move backwards as forwards; he says it is becoming conceited, which is a good sign; and in a recent letter, which we venture to quote, he reminds us, referring to the headlong speculation of the new generation, that "the ardor of genius is very different from the presumption of ignorance, and the more we learn the stronger becomes our conviction that whatever may be our progress in removing doubts, it is only to be involved in others still more inextricable — only groping in the dark for Captain Kyd's buried money." He is fully persuaded that the ancients were as wise as the moderns, that in the lapse of ages the world forgets full as much as it learns, and that most if not all of the theories of our philosophers were suggested in the old schools, whose masters differed from the reckless teachers of our time only in an unwillingness to endanger the existence of society by practical applications of vague speculations unsupported by sound reason. On the whole, he concludes that, however it may be with the present, our intellectual eccentricities, under the direction of a wise Providence, will hereafter tend to the general benefit of the human race, or at least leave it but more strongly convinced of the immutability of ancient truths; that the wisdom of Omnipotence is the best corrective of the presumption of its creatures, and often saves the ship when the crew is intoxicated, the captain desperate, and the pilot asleep at the helm.

Such are some of the "whim-whams and opinions" thrown out in various conversations by "Launcelot Langstaff" in his old age; and in his pleasant home by the

Hudson he has such enjoyment of his philosophy as should be derived from a conviction of its truth, and the consciousness of a life well spent in its vindication and in agreement with its precepts.

Washington Irving.



Washington Irving

Sunnyside Dec 15th 1851



IRVING.

THE similarity of the landscape in different portions of the country, is often mentioned as a defect in our scenery; but it has the advantage of constantly affording an epitome of nature and an identity of suggestion favorable to national associations. Without the wild beauty of the Ohio or the luxuriant vegetation of the Mississippi, the Hudson thus preserves a certain veri-similitude in the form of its banks, the windings of its channel, and the hills and trees along its shores, essentially American. The reflective

observer can easily find in these characteristic features, and in the details of the panorama that meets his eye, even during a rapid transit, tokens of all that is peculiar and endeared in the condition and history of his native land; and it is therefore not less gratifying to his sense of the appropriate than his feeling for the beautiful, that the home of our favorite author should consecrate the scene. To realize how the Hudson thus identifies itself with national associations, while scanning the details we must bear in mind the general relations of the noble river,— the great metropolis toward which it speeds; the isle-gemmed bay and adjacent ocean; and then reverting to the chain of inland seas with which it is linked, and the junction of its grandest elevations with the vast range of the Alleghanies that intersect the boundless West, recall the intricate network of iron whereby the most distant village that nestles at their feet is connected with its picturesque shores; thus regarded as a vital part of a sublime whole, the Hudson fills the imagination with grandeur while it fascinates the eye with loveliness. A few miles from the shores, and in many instances on the highest ranges of hills, gleam isolated lakes, fringed with woods and dotted with small islands, whence azalia blossoms and feathery shrubs overhang the water, which is pellucid as crystal, in summer decked with lilies, in winter affording inexhaustible quarries of ice, and, at all seasons, the most romantic haunts for the lover of nature. Nor is this comprehensive aspect confined to the river's natural adjuncts. The immediate localities are equally significant. On the Jersey shore, which meets the gaze at the very commencement of the upward voyage, are visible the grove where

Hamilton fell—the most affecting incident in our political annals; and the heights of Weehawken, celebrated by the muse of Halleck; soon, on the opposite shore, we descry the evergreen foliage of Trinity Church Cemetery, beneath which lie the remains of that brave explorer of the forest and lover of the winged tribes of the land—Audubon; now rise the Palisades—nearest landmarks of the bold stand first taken by the colonists against British oppression, where Fort Washington was captured by the Hessians in 1776; and whence the enemy's vessels of war were so adroitly frightened away by Talbot's fire-ship, and the most persecuted martyrs of the Revolution were borne to the infamous prison-ship at Long Island. This wonderful range of columnar rock, varying in height from fifty to five hundred feet, and extending along the river to the distance of twenty miles, rises perpendicular from the water, and the channel often runs immediately at its base. The gray, indented sides of this natural rampart, its summit tufted with thickets, and a few fishers' huts nestled at its foot, resembles the ancient walls of an impregnable fortress; here and there the traces of a wood-slide mark its weather-stained face; and in the stillness of a winter day, when the frozen water collected in its apertures expands in the sunshine, from the other side of the river may be distinctly heard the clang of the falling trap-rock dissevered from the mass. Opposite are seen the variegated hills and dales of Westchester county. There let us pause, in the neighborhood of our author's residence, to view the familiar scene amid which he lives. Gaze from beneath any of the numerous porticos that hospitably offer shelter on the hillsides and

at the river's marge, breathe the pure air, and contemplate the fresh tints of a June morning. In this vicinity the river expands to the width of two or three miles, forming what is called Tappan Bay — which, seen from the surrounding eminences, appears like an immense lake ; picturesque undulations limit the view, meadows covered with luxuriant grain that waves gracefully in the breeze, emerald with turf, dark with copses, or alive with tasselled maize, alternate with clumps of forest-trees or cheerful orchards ; over this scene of rural prosperity flit gorgeous clouds through a firmament of pale azure, and around it wind roads that seem to lure the spectator into the beautiful glens of the neighbouring valleys. Nearer to his eye are patches of woodland overhanging ravines, where rock, foliage and stream combine to form a romantic and sequestered retreat, invaded by no sound but that of rustling leaf, chirping bird, humming insect, or snapping chestnut-burr ; parallel with these delicious nooks that usually overhang the river, are fields in the highest state of cultivation surrounding elegant mansions; but farther inland stretch pastures where the mullein grows undisturbed, stone-walls and vagrant fences divide fallow acres, the sweet-briar clambering over their rugged surface, clumps of elder-bushes or a few willows clustered about a pond, and the red cones of the sumac, dead leaves, brown mushrooms and downy thistles, mark one of those neglected yet wildly rural spots which Crabbe loved to describe. Even here at the sunset hour, we have but to turn towards the river, at some elevated point, and a scene of indescribable beauty is exhibited. The placid water is tinted with amber, hues of

transcendent brightness glow along the western horizon, fleecy masses of vapor are illumined with exquisite shades of color; deep scintillations of rose or purple kindle the edges of the clouds; the zenith wears a crystalline tone; the vesper star twinkles with a bright though softened ray; and the peace of heaven seems to descend upon the transparent wave and the balmy air. And if we observe the immediate scene around one of the humble red-roofed homesteads or superior dwellings, which are scattered over the hillsides and valleys of this region, and call back the vision from its widest to the most narrow range, the eye is not less gratified, nor the heart less moved, by images of rustic comfort and beauty. Perhaps a large tulip-tree, with its broad expanse of verdure and waving chalices, or a superb chestnut, plumed with feathery blossoms, lends its grateful shade, while we follow the darting swallow, watch the contented kine, or curiously note the humming-bird poised, like a fragment of the rainbow, over a woodbine wreathed about the porch, and mark the downy bee clinging to the mealy stamen of the holyhock, or murmuring on the pink globe of the clover. The odor of the hay-field, the glancing of countless white sails far below, the flitting of shadows and the refreshing breeze — all unite to form a picture of tranquil delight. Resuming our course, after such an interlude, we pass the scene of the gallant and unfortunate Andre's capture and execution. Stoney Point, where another fierce struggle for our liberties occurred, the site of the fortification being marked by a lighthouse, the towering Dunderberg mountain, and that lofty promontory called Anthony's nose, where a sudden turn of the river in

a western direction all at once ushers us into the glorious Highlands. The house once occupied by the traitor Arnold is soon forgotten in the thought of Kosciusko, whose monument rises on the precipitous bank at West Point; and here the wild umbrage that covers Cro'nest recalls Drake's fanciful poem; and old Fort Putnam, crowning the highest of the majestic hills, seems waiting for the moonbeams to clothe its ruins with enchantment; Buttermilk fall glimmers on one side, while the proud summit of the Grand Sachem towers on the other. Then opens the bay of Newburgh, a town memorable as the spot where the mutinous letters of the Revolution were dated, and where the headquarters and parting scene of Washington and his officers are consecrated to endeared remembrance. Beyond appear the most beautiful domains in the land, where broad ranges of meadow and groups of noble trees, in the highest state of order and fertility, transport us in fancy to the rural life of England. The last great feature of this matchless panorama is the Kaatskill Mountains rising in their misty shrouds, or, in a clear atmosphere, stretching away in magnificent proportions, whence the eye may wander for sixty miles over a country mapped by prolific acres, with every shade of verdure — sublimated, as it were, by interminable ranges of mountain, and animated by the silvery windings of the Hudson, whose gleaming tide lends brilliancy to the more dense hues of tree, field and umbrageous headland.

The navigable extent of the river, and the fresh tints of its water, banks and sky, are in remarkable contrast with those celebrated transatlantic streams endeared to

our imaginations. To an American the first view of the Tiber and the Seine, their turbid waters and flat shores, occasions peculiar disappointment; and it is the associations of the Rhine and Lake Como, and those features they derived from art, which chiefly give them superiority. The mellow light of the past and the charm of an historical name, invest the ruined castles and famed localities of their shores with an enduring interest.

In the spirit of hearty enthusiasm not less than local attachment, does Irving thank God he was born on the banks of the Hudson; for it possesses all the elements requisite to inspire the fancy and attach the heart. The blue waving line of its distant hills in the twilight of the early dawn; the splendid hues of its surrounding foliage in autumn; the glassy expanse of its broad surface, and the ermine drapery of its majestic promontories in winter; the scene of verdant luxury it presents in summer; its sheltered nooks, pebbly coves and rocky bluffs; the echoes of the lofty Highlands and the balmy hush of evening, when the saffron-tinted water reflects each passing sail, and the cry of the whip-poor-will or monotone of the Katy-did, are the only sounds of life—all utter a mysterious appeal to the senses and imagination.

Washington Irving, although so obviously adapted by natural endowments for the career in which he has acquired such eminence, was educated, like many other men of letters, for the legal profession; he, however, early abandoned the idea of practice at the bar for the more lucrative vocation of a merchant. His brothers were established in business in the city of New-York, and invited

him to take an interest in their house, with the understanding that his literary tastes should be gratified by abundant leisure. The unfortunate crisis in mercantile affairs that followed the peace of 1815, involved his family, and threw him upon his own resources for subsistence. To this apparent disaster is owing his subsequent devotion to literature. The strong bias of his own nature, however, had already indicated this destiny; his inaptitude for affairs, his sensibility to the beautiful, his native humor and the love he early exhibited for wandering, observing, and indulging in day-dreams, would infallibly have led him to record his fancies and feelings. Indeed, he had already done so with effect in a series of letters which appeared in a newspaper of which his brother was editor. His tendency to a free, meditative and adventurous life, was confirmed by a visit to Europe in his early youth. Born in the city of New-York on the 3d of April, 1783,* he pursued his studies, his rambles, and his occasional pen-craft there until 1804, when ill-health made it expedient for him to go abroad. He sailed for Bordeaux, and thence roamed over the most beautiful portions of Southern Europe, visited Switzerland and Holland, sojourned in Paris, and returned home in 1806. During his absence he seriously entertained the idea of becoming a painter; but subsequently resumed his law studies, and was admitted to the bar. Soon after, however, the first number of Salmagundi appeared, an era in our literary annals; and in December, 1809, was published "Knickerbocker's History

* The house in which Mr. Irving was born stood at No. 131 William-street. It was replaced in 1846 by one of the "Washington Stores."

of New-York." He afterwards edited the Analectic Magazine. In the autumn of 1814 he joined the military staff of the Governor of New-York, as aid-de-camp and secretary, with the title of colonel. At the close of the war he embarked for Liverpool, with a view of making a second tour in Europe; but the financial troubles intervening, and the remarkable success which had attended his literary enterprises being an encouragement to pursue a vocation which necessity, not less than taste, now urged him to follow, he embarked in the career of authorship. The papers which were published under the title of "The Sketch-Book," at once gained him the sympathy and admiration of his contemporaries. They originally appeared in New-York, but attracted immediate attention in England, and were republished there in 1820. After residing there five years, Mr. Irving again visited Paris, and returned to bring out "Bracebridge Hall" in London in May, 1822. The next winter he passed in Dresden, and in the following spring put "Tales of a Traveller" to press. He soon after went to Madrid and wrote the Life of Columbus, which appeared in 1828. In the spring of that year he visited the South of Spain, and the result was the Chronicles of the Conquest of Granada, which was published in 1829. The same year he revisited that region, and collected the materials for his "Alhambra." He was soon after appointed Secretary of Legation to the American Embassy in London, which office he held until the return of Mr. McLane in 1831. While in England he received one of the fifty-guinea gold medals provided by George IV. for eminence in historical composition, and the degree of LL. D. from

the University of Oxford. His return to New-York in 1832 was greeted by a festival, at which were gathered his surviving friends and all the illustrious men of his native metropolis. The following summer he accompanied one of the Commissioners for removing the Indian tribes west of the Mississippi. The fruit of this excursion was his graphic "Tour on the Prairies." Soon after appeared "Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey," and "Legends of the Conquests of Spain." In 1836 he published "Astoria," and in 1837 "The Adventures of Capt. Bonneville." In 1839 he contributed several papers to the "Knickerbocker Magazine." Early in 1842 he was appointed Minister to Spain. On his return to this country in 1846, he began the publication of a revised edition of his works, to the list of which he has since added a Life of Goldsmith and "Mahomet and his Successors;" and he is now engaged upon a Life of Washington. This outline should be filled by the reader's imagination with the accessories and the coloring incident to so varied, honorable and congenial a life. In all his wanderings, his eye was busied with the scenes of nature, and cognizant of their every feature, his memory brooded over the traditions of the past, and his heart caught and reflected every phase of humanity. With the feelings of a poet and the habitudes of an artist, he thus wandered over the rural districts of merry England, the melancholy hills of romantic Spain, and the exuberant wilderness of his native land, gathering up their most picturesque aspects and their most affecting legends, and transferring them, with the pure and vivid colors of his genial expression, into permanent memorials. Every quaint outline, every mellowed

tint, the aërial perspective that leads the sight into the mazes of antiquity, the amusing still-life or characteristic human attributes, — all that excites wonder, sympathy and merriment, he thus recognized and preserved, and shed over all the sunny atmosphere of a kindly heart and the freshness of a natural zest, and the attraction of a modest character, — a combination which has been happily characterized by Lowell in the Fable for Critics:

> "What! Irving? thrice welcome warm heart and fine brain,
> You bring back the happiest spirit from Spain,
> And the gravest sweet humor, that ever were there
> Since Cervantes met death in his gentle despair;
> Nay, don't be embarrassed, nor look so beseeching,
> I shan't run directly against my own preaching,
> And having just laughed at their Raphaels and Dantes,
> Go to setting you up beside matchless Cervantes;
> But allow me to speak what I honestly feel,
> To a true poet-heart add the fun of Dick Steele,
> Throw in all of Addison, minus the chill,
> With the whole of that partnership's stock and good-will,
> Mix well, and while stirring, hum o'er, as a spell,
> The 'fine old English Gentleman,' simmer it well,
> Sweeten just to your own private liking, then strain,
> That only the finest and clearest remain.
> Let it stand out of doors till a soul it receives
> From the warm lazy sun loitering down through green leaves,
> And you'll find a choice nature not wholly deserving
> A name either English or Yankee — just Irving."

The eminent success which has attended the late republication of Irving's works, teaches a lesson that we hope will not be lost on the cultivators of literature. It proves a truth which all men of enlightened taste intuitively feel, but which

is constantly forgotten by perverse aspirants for literary fame; and that is — the permanent value of a direct, simple and natural style. It is not only the genial philosophy, the humane spirit, the humor and pathos of Irving, which endear his writings and secure for them an habitual interest, but it is the refreshment afforded by a recurrence to the unalloyed, unaffected, clear and flowing style in which he invariably expresses himself.

The place which our author holds in national affection can never be superseded. His name is indissolubly associated with the dawn of our recognized literary culture. We have always regarded his popularity in England as one of the most charming traits of his reputation, and that, too, for the very reasons which narrow critics once assigned as derogatory to his national spirit. His treatment of English subjects; the felicitous manner in which he revealed the life of our ancestral land to us her prosperous offspring, mingled as it was with vivid pictures of our own scenery, touched a chord in the heart which responds to all that is generous in sympathy and noble in association. If we regard Irving with national pride and affection, it is partly on account of his cosmopolitan tone of mind — a quality, among others, in which he greatly resembles Goldsmith. It is, indeed, worthy of a true American writer that, with his own country and a particular region thereof as a nucleus of his sentiment, he can see and feel the characteristic and the beautiful, not only in old England, but in romantic Spain; that the phlegmatic Dutchman and the mercurial southern European find an equal place in his comprehensive glance.

To range from the local wit of Salmagundi to the grand and serious historical enterprise which achieved a classic Life of Columbus, and from the simple grief embalmed in the "Widow's Son" to the observant humor of the "Stout Gentleman," bespeaks not only an artist of exquisite and versatile skill, but a man of the most liberal heart and catholic taste.

Reputations, in their degree and kind, are as legitimate subjects of taste as less abstract things,—and in that of Washington Irving there is a completeness and unity seldom realized. It accords, in its unchallenged purity, with the harmonious character of the author and the serene attractions of his home. By temperament and cast of mind he was ordained to be a gentle minister at the altar of literature, an interpreter of the latent music of nature and the redeeming affections of humanity; and, with a consistency not less dictated by good sense than true feeling, he has instinctively adhered to the sphere he was specially gifted to adorn. Since his advent as a writer, an intense style has come into vogue, glowing rhetoric, bold verbal tactics, and a more powerful exercise of thought characterize many of the popular authors of the day; but in literature as in life, there are various provinces both of utility and taste; and in this country and age, a conservative tone, a reliance on the kindly emotions and the refined perceptions, are qualities eminently desirable. Therefore as we look forth upon the calm and picturesque landscape that environs him, we are content that no fierce polemic, visionary philanthropist, or morbid sentimentalist has thus linked his name with the tranquil beauties of

the scene; but that it is the home of an author who, with graceful diction and an affectionate heart, celebrates the scenic charms of the outward world and the harmless eccentricities and natural sentiment of his race. The true bias of Irving's genius is artistic. The lights and shadows of English life, the legendary romance of Spain, the novelties of a tour on the Prairies of the West, and of adventures in the Rocky Mountains, the poetic beauty of the Alhambra, the memories of Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey, the quaint and comfortable philosophy of the Dutch colonists, and the scenery of the Hudson, are themes upon which he expatiates with the grace and zest of a master. His affinity of style with the classic British essayists served not only as an invaluable precedent in view of the crude mode of expression prevalent half a century ago among us, but also proved a bond in letters between our own country and England, by recalling the identity of language and domestic life, at a time when great asperity of feeling divided the two countries.

The circumstances of our daily life and the impulse of our national destiny, amply insure the circulation of progressive and practical ideas; but there is little in either to sustain a wholesome attachment to the past, or inspire disinterested feeling and imaginative recreation. Accordingly, we rejoice that our literary pioneer is not only an artist of the beautiful, but one whose pencil is dipped in the mellow tints of legendary lore, who infuses the element of repose and the sportiveness of fancy into his creations, and thus yields genuine refreshment and a needed lesson to the fevered minds of his countrymen. Of all his immortal pictures, however, the

most precious to his countrymen is that which contains the house of old Baltus Van Tassell, especially since it has been refitted and ornamented by Geoffrey Crayon; and pleasant as it is to their imagination as Wolfert's Roost, it is far more dear to their hearts as Sunnyside.

And the legends which he has so gracefully woven around every striking point in the scene, readily assimilate with its character, whether they breathe grotesque humor, harmless superstition, or pensive sentiment. We smile habitually, and with the same zest, at the idea of the Trumpeter's rubicund proboscis, the valiant defence of Bearn Island, and the figure which the pedagogue cuts on the dorsal ridge of old Gunpowder; and, inhaling the magnetic atmosphere of Sleepy Hollow, we easily give credit to the apparition of the Headless



Horseman, and have no desire to repudiate the frisking imps of the Duyvel's Dans Kamer. The buxom charms of Katrina Van Tassel, and the substantial comforts of her paternal farm-house, are as tempting to us as they once were to the unfortunate Ichabod and the successful Brom Bones.

The mansion of this prosperous and valiant family, so often celebrated in his writings, is the residence of Washington Irving. It is approached by a sequestered road, which enhances the effect of its natural beauty. A more tranquil and protected abode, nestled in the lap of nature, never captivated a poet's eye. Rising from the bank of the river, which a strip of woodland alone intercepts, it unites every rural charm to the most complete seclusion. From this interesting domain is visible the broad surface of the Tappan Zee; the grounds slope to the water's edge, and are bordered by wooded ravines; a clear brook ripples near, and several neat paths lead to shadowy walks or fine points of river scenery. The house itself is a graceful combination of the English cottage and the Dutch farm-house. The crow-stepped gables, the tiles in the hall, and the weathercocks, partake of the latter character; while the white walls gleaming through the trees, the smooth and verdant turf, and the mantling vines of ivy and clambering roses, suggest the former. Indeed, in this delightful homestead are tokens of all that is most characteristic of its owner. The simplicity and rustic grace of the abode indicate an unperverted taste,—its secluded position a love of retirement; the cottage ornaments remind us of his unrivalled pictures of English country-life; the weathercock that used to veer about on the Stadt-house of Amsterdam, is a symbol of the fatherland; while the one that adorned



the grand dwellings in Albany before the revolution, is a significant memorial of the old Dutch colonists; and they are thus both associated with the fragrant memory of that famous and unique historian Diedrich Knickerbocker. The quaint and the beautiful are thus blended, and the effect of the whole is singularly harmonious. From the quietude of this retreat are obtainable the most extensive prospects; and while its sheltered position breathes the very air of domestic repose, the scenery it commands is eloquent of broad and generous sympathies.

Not less rare than beautiful is the lot of the author, to whom it is permitted to gather up the memorials of his fame and witness their permanent recognition;—the first partial favor of his cotemporaries renewed by the mature appreciation of another generation; and equally gratifying is the coincidence of such a noble satisfaction with a return to the cherished and picturesque haunts of childhood and youth. It is a phase of life scarcely less delightful to contemplate than to enjoy; and we agree with a native artist who declared that in his many trips up and down the Hudson, he never passed Sunnyside without a thrill of pleasure. Nor, if thus interesting even as an object in the landscape, is it difficult to imagine what moral attractions it possesses to the kindred and friends who there habitually enjoy such genial companionship and frank hospitality. To this favored spot, around which his fondest reminiscences hovered during a long absence, Mr. Irving returned, a few years since, crowned with the purest literary renown, and as much attached to his native scenery as when he wandered there in the holiday reveries of boyhood. And here, in the midst of a landscape his

pen has made attractive in both hemispheres, and of friends whose love surpasses the highest meed of fame, he lives in daily view of scenes thrice endeared—by taste, association, and habit;—the old locust that blossoms on the green bank in spring, the brook that sparkles along the grass, the peaked turret and vine-covered wall of that modest yet traditional dwelling, the favorite valley watered by the romantic Pocantoro, and, above all, the glorious river of his heart.

We are strongly tempted to record some of the charming anecdotes which fall from his lips in the hour of genial companionship; to revert to the details of his personal career; the remarkable coincidences by which he became a spectator of some of the most noted occurrences of the last half century;—his personal intercourse with the gifted and renowned of both hemispheres; the fond admiration manifested by his countrymen in making his name familiar as a household word, on their ships and steamers, their schools, hotels and townships; the beautiful features of his domestic life; the affectionate reverence with which he is regarded by his relatives and his immediate friends and neighbors;—the refined yet joyous tone of his truly "Sunnyside" hospitalities, so charmingly enlivened by his humorous and historical reminiscences. But two considerations warn us from these seductive topics—the one a cherished hope that the reminiscences thus briefly alluded to may yet be gathered up by his own hand; the other our knowledge of his delicacy of feeling and sensitive habit in regard to personalities. In a letter to the editor of the "Knickerbocker Magazine," Mr. Irving, under the character of Geoffrey Crayon, gives an account of his purchase of the Van Tassel estate, now called

"Sunnyside," and a characteristic description of the neighborhood, which abounds in some of the happiest touches of his style. This letter was the commencement of a series of articles published in the Knickerbocker, which, excepting his "Life of Goldsmith," are the last of his published writings. It appeared in the Knickerbocker for March, 1839, from which we extract it.

"To the Editor of the Knickerbocker.

"Sir: I have observed that as a man advances in life, he is subject to a kind of plethora of the mind, doubtless occasioned by the vast accumulation of wisdom and experience upon the brain. Hence he is apt to become narrative and admonitory, that is to say, fond of telling long stories, and of doling out advice, to the small profit and great annoyance of his friends. As I have a great horror of becoming the oracle, or, more technically speaking, the 'bore' of the domestic circle, and would much rather bestow my wisdom and tediousness upon the world at large, I have always sought to ease off this surcharge of the intellect by means of my pen, and hence have inflicted divers gossipping volumes upon the patience of the public. I am tired, however, of writing volumes; they do not afford exactly the relief I require; there is too much preparation, arrangement, and parade, in this set form of coming before the public. I am growing too indolent and unambitious for any thing that requires labor or display. I have thought, therefore, of securing to myself a snug corner in some periodical work, where I might, as it were, loll at my ease in my elbow chair,

and chat sociably with the public, as with an old friend, on any chance subject that might pop into my brain.

"In looking around, for this purpose, upon the various excellent periodicals with which our country abounds, my eye was struck by the title of your work—'The Knickerbocker.' My heart leaped at the sight.

"Diedrich Knickerbocker, Sir, was one of my earliest and most valued friends, and the recollection of him is associated with some of the pleasantest scenes of my youthful days. To explain this, and to show how I came into possession of sundry of his posthumous works, which I have from time to time given to the world, permit me to relate a few particulars of our early intercourse. I give them with the more confidence, as I know the interest you take in that departed worthy, whose name and effigy are stamped upon your title-page, and as they will be found important to the better understanding and relishing divers communications I may have to make to you.

"My first acquaintance with that great and good man, for such I may venture to call him, now that the lapse of some thirty years has shrouded his name with venerable antiquity, and the popular voice has elevated him to the rank of the classical historians of yore, my first acquaintance with him was formed on the banks of the Hudson, not far from the wizard region of Sleepy Hollow. He had come there in the course of his researches among the Dutch neighborhoods for materials for his immortal history. For this purpose, he was ransacking the archives of one of the most ancient and historical mansions in the country. It was a lowly edifice, built in the time of the Dutch dynasty, and stood on a green

bank, overshadowed by trees, from which it peeped forth upon the Great Tappan Zee, so famous among early Dutch navigators. A bright pure spring welled up at the foot of the green bank; a wild brook came babbling down a neighboring ravine, and threw itself into a little woody cove, in front of the mansion. It was indeed as quiet and sheltered a nook as the heart of man could require, in which to take refuge from the cares and troubles of the world; and as such, it had been chosen in old times, by Wolfert Acker, one of the privy councillors of the renowned Peter Stuyvesant.

"This worthy but ill-starred man had lead a weary and worried life, throughout the stormy reign of the chivalric Peter, being one of those unlucky wights with whom the world is ever at variance, and who are kept in a continual fume and fret, by the wickedness of mankind. At the time of the subjugation of the province by the English, he retired hither in high dudgeon; with the bitter determination to bury himself from the world, and live here in peace and quietness for the remainder of his days. In token of this fixed resolution, he inscribed over his door the favorite Dutch motto, 'Lust in Rust' (pleasure in repose). The mansion was thence called 'Wolfert's Rust'—Wolfert's Rest; but in process of time, the name was vitiated into Wolfert's Roost, probably from its quaint cock-loft look, or from its having a weather-cock perched on every gable. This name it continued to bear, long after the unlucky Wolfert was driven forth once more upon a wrangling world, by the tongue of a termagant wife; for it passed into a proverb through the neighborhood, and has been handed down by

tradition, that the cock of the Roost was the most henpecked bird in the country.

"This primitive and historical mansion has long since passed through many changes. At the time of the sojourn of Diedrich Knickerbocker, it was in possession of the gallant family of the Van Tassels, who have figured so conspicuously in his writings. What appears to have given it peculiar value, in his eyes, was the rich treasury of historical facts here secretly hoarded up, like buried gold; for it is said that Wolfert Acker, when he retreated from New Amsterdam, carried off with him many of the records and journals of the province, pertaining to the Dutch dynasty; swearing that they should never fall into the hands of the English. These, like the lost books of Livy, had baffled the research of former historians; but these did I find the indefatigable Diedrich diligently deciphering. He was already a sage in years and experience, I but an idle stripling; yet he did not despise my youth and ignorance, but took me kindly by the hand, and led me gently into those paths of local and traditional lore which he was so fond of exploring. I sat with him in his little chamber at the Roost, and watched the antiquarian patience and perseverance with which he deciphered those venerable Dutch documents, worse than Herculaneum manuscripts. I sat with him by the spring, at the foot of the green bank, and listened to his heroic tales about the worthies of the olden time, the paladins of New Amsterdam. I accompanied him in his legendary researches about Tarrytown and Sing-Sing, and explored with him the spell-bound recesses of Sleepy Hollow. I was present at many of his conferences with the good old Dutch

burghers and their wives, from whom he derived many of those marvellous facts not laid down in books or records, and which give such superior value and authenticity to his history, over all others that have been written concerning the New Netherlands.

"But let me check my proneness to dilate upon this favorite theme; I may recur to it hereafter. Suffice it to say, the intimacy thus formed, continued for a considerable time; and in company with the worthy Diedrich, I visited many of the places celebrated by his pen. The currents of our lives at length diverged. He remained at home to complete his mighty work, while a vagrant fancy led me to wander about the world. Many, many years elapsed, before I returned to the parent soil. In the interim, the venerable historian of the New Netherlands had been gathered to his fathers, but his name has risen to renown. His native city, that city in which he so much delighted, had decreed all manner of costly honors to his memory. I found his effigy imprinted upon new-year cakes, and devoured with eager relish by holiday urchins; a great oyster-house bore the name of "Knickerbocker Hall;" and I narrowly escaped the pleasure of being run over by a Knickerbocker omnibus!

"Proud of having associated with a man who had achieved such greatness, I now recalled our early intimacy with tenfold pleasure, and sought to revisit the scenes we had trodden together. The most important of these was the mansion of the Van Tassels, the Roost of the unfortunate Wolfert. Time, which changes all things, is but slow in its operations upon a Dutchman's dwelling. I found the venerable and quaint little edifice much as I had seen it during the sojourn

of Diedrich. There stood his elbow-chair in the corner of the room he had occupied; the old-fashioned Dutch writing-desk at which he had pored over the chronicles of the Manhattoes; there was the old wooden chest, with the archives left by Wolfert Acker, many of which, however, had been fired off as wadding from the long duck gun of the Van Tassels. The scene around the mansion was still the same; the green bank; the spring beside which I had listened to the legendary narratives of the historian; the wild brook babbling down to the woody cove, and the overshadowing locust trees, half shutting out the prospect of the Great Tappan Zee.

"As I looked round upon the scene, my heart yearned at the recollection of my departed friend, and I wistfully eyed the mansion which he had inhabited, and which was fast mouldering to decay. The thought struck me to arrest the desolating hand of Time; to rescue the historic pile from utter ruin, and to make it the closing scene of my wanderings; a quiet home, where I might enjoy 'lust in rust' for the remainder of my days. It is true, the fate of the unlucky Wolfert passed across my mind; but I consoled myself with the reflection that I was a bachelor, and that I had no termagant wife to dispute the sovereignty of the Roost with me.

"I have become possessor of the Roost! I have repaired and renovated it with religious care, in the genuine Dutch style, and have adorned and illustrated it with sundry reliques of the glorious days of the New Netherlands. A venerable weather-cock, of portly Dutch dimensions, which once battled with the wind on the top of the Stadt-House of New Amsterdam, in the time of Peter Stuyvesant, now erects its crest on the gable end of my edifice; a gilded horse, in

full gallop, once the weather-cock of the great Vander Heyden Palace of Albany, now glitters in the sunshine, and veers with every breeze, on the peaked turret over my portal: my sanctum sanctorum is the chamber once honored by the illustrious Diedrich, and it is from his elbow-chair, and his identical old Dutch writing-desk, that I pen this rambling epistle.

"Here, then, have I set up my rest, surrounded by the recollection of early days, and the mementos of the historian of the Manhattoes, with that glorious river before me, which flows with such majesty through his works, and which has ever been to me a river of delight.

"I thank God I was born on the banks of the Hudson! I think it an invaluable advantage to be born and brought up in the neighborhood of some grand and noble object in nature; a river, a lake, or a mountain. We make a friendship with it, we in a manner ally ourselves to it for life. It remains an object of our pride and affections, a rallying point, to call us home again after all our wanderings. 'The things which we have learned in our childhood,' says an old writer, 'grow up with our souls, and unite themselves to it.' So it is with the scenes among which we have passed our early days; they influence the whole course of our thoughts and feelings; and I fancy I can trace much of what is good and pleasant in my own heterogeneous compound, to my early companionship with this glorious river. In the warmth of my youthful enthusiasm, I used to clothe it with moral attributes, and almost to give it a soul. I admired its frank, bold, honest character; its noble sincerity and perfect truth. Here was no specious, smiling surface, covering the danger-

ous sand-bar or perfidious rock; but a stream deep as it was broad, and bearing with honorable faith the bark that trusted to its waves. I gloried in its simple, quiet, majestic, epic flow; ever straight forward. Once indeed, it turns aside for a moment, forced from its course by opposing mountains, but it struggles bravely through them, and immediately resumes its straightforward march. Behold, thought I, an emblem of a good man's course through life; ever simple, open, and direct; or if, overpowered by adverse circumstances, he deviate into error, it is but momentary; he soon recovers his onward and honorable career, and continues it to the end of his pilgrimage.

"Excuse this rhapsody, into which I have been betrayed by a revival of early feelings. The Hudson is, in a manner, my first and last love; and after all my wanderings, and seeming infidelities, I return to it with a heart-felt preference over all the other rivers in the world. I seem to catch new life, as I bathe in its ample billows, and inhale the pure breezes of its hills. It is true, the romance of youth is past, that once spread illusions over every scene. I can no longer picture an Arcadia in every green valley; nor a fairy land among the distant mountains; nor a peerless beauty in every villa gleaming among the trees; but though the illusions of youth have faded from the landscape, the recollections of departed years and departed pleasures shed over it the mellow charm of evening sunshine.

"Permit me then, Mr. Editor, through the medium of your work, to hold occasional discourse from my retreat, with the busy world I have abandoned. I have much to say about what I have seen, heard, felt, and thought, through the

of those "indignation meetings" held on foot in the time of William the Testy, where men met together to rail at public abuses, frown over the evils of the times and make each other miserable; there were joyous gatherings of the two sexes to dance and make merry. Now were instituted "quilting bees" and "husking bees" and other rural assemblages where, under the inspiring influence of the bottle toil was lightened by gaiety and relieved of by the dance. "Raising bees" also were frequent, where heroes sprang up at the wagging of the bottle stick, as the walls of Thebes sprang up of yore to the sound of the lyre of Amphion. Jolly autumn, when pours its treasures over hill and dale was, in those days, a season for the lifting of the heel as well as the heart; labor came dancing in the train of abundance and frolic prevailed throughout the land. Happy days!

course of a varied and rambling life, and some lucubrations, that have long been encumbering my port-folio; together with divers reminiscences of the venerable historian of the New Netherlands, that may not be unacceptable to those who have taken an interest in his writings, and are desirous of any thing that may cast a light back upon our early history. Let your readers rest assured of one thing, that, though retired from the world, I am not disgusted with it; and that if, in my communings with it, I do not prove very wise, I trust I shall at least prove very good-natured.

Which is all at present, from

Yours, etc.,

GEOFFREY CRAYON.



William Cullen Bryant.



BRYANT.

IF ever there were poet of whom it is not necessary to ask whether he lives in town or country, it is Mr. Bryant. Not even Burns gives more unmistakable signs of the inspiration of rural sights and sounds. Winds breathe soft or loud; sunshine or shadow flits over the landscape; leaves rustle and birds sing, wherever his verses are read. The ceiling over our heads becomes a forest, with green boughs waving; the carpet turns to fresh grass, and the air we breathe is moist and fragrant with mosses and hidden

streams. No need of carrying the book out of doors to aid the illusion; its own magic is irresistible, and brings out-of-doors wherever it goes. Here is a mind whose

> Raptures are not conjured up
> To serve occasion of poetic pomp,
> But genuine —

and such as could not be excited or satisfied with pictures of what it loves. All is consistent, therefore, when we find the poet's home a great, old-time mansion, so embosomed in trees and vines that we can hardly catch satisfactory glimpses of the bay on which it lies, through the leafy windows, of which an overhanging roof prolongs the shade. No greener, quieter or more purely simple retreat can be found; none with which the owner and his tastes and occupations are more in keeping. It would be absurd to say that all appearance of show or style is carefully avoided; for it requires very little observation to perceive that these are absent from the place simply because they never entered its master's mind. I suppose if any thing could completely disgust Mr. Bryant with this beloved home, it would be the addition of any outward costliness, or even elegance, calculated to attract the attention of the passing stranger. Friend Richard Kirk — a Quaker of the Quakers, if he may be judged by his works — little thought, when he built this great, ample, square dwelling-place, in the lap of the hills, in 1787, that he was fashioning the house of a poet — one worthy to be "spared when temple and tower went to the ground," because it is the sanctuary of a priest of Nature. Whether any

Captain, or colonel, or knight in arms

did spare it from a prophetic insight into its destination, we cannot tell; but there was wild work in its vicinity, and stories of outrages perpetrated by "cow-boys" and other desperadoes are still fresh in old families. The wide region still called Hempstead was then inhabited for the most part by loyalists, devoutly attached to the parent government, and solicitous, by means of town meetings passing loyal resolutions, and conventions denouncing the spirit of rebellion against "his most gracious majesty King George the Third," to put down the dangerous agitation that began to threaten "our civil and religious liberties, which can only be secured by our present constitution;"—and this northern part of the township, in particular, held many worthy citizens who felt it their duty to resist to the last the unhallowed desire of the people to govern themselves. In September, 1775, an official reports that "without the assistance of Col. Lasher's battalion" he "shall not be able, in Jamaica and Hempstead, to carry the resolutions of Congress into execution," as "the people conceal all their arms that are of any value." The disaffection of the district was considered important enough to justify a special commission from Congress, then sitting at Philadelphia, requiring the resistants to deliver their arms and ammunition on oath, as persons "incapable of resolving to live and die freemen, and more disposed to quit their liberties than part with the small portion of their property that may be necessary to defend them." This seems to have had the desired effect, for the people not only brought in their arms, but were "much irritated with

those who had led them to make opposition,"—says a contemporary letter. The lovers of peace and plenty, rather than commotion and scanty harvests, were, however, still so numerous in Queen's county, that on the 21st of October, 1776, about thirteen hundred freeholders presented a most humble petition to Lord Howe, entreating that he would "declare the county in the peace of His Majesty," and denouncing "the infatuated conduct of the Congress," as having "blasted their hopes of returning peace and security." Among the names appended to this petition we find that of Richard Kirk—a lover of comfort, doubtless, like his brethren in general,—and who, when once the drum had ceased to outrage the mild echoes of that Quaker region, returned to his farming or his merchandize, and in due season, being prospered, founded the substantial dwelling now known as Spring Bank, destined to last far into the time of freedom and safety, and to prove, in these latter days, fit harbor for a poet whose sympathies are any where but with the signers of that humble petition.

The house stands at the foot of a woody hill, which shelters it on the east, facing Hempstead harbor, to which the flood tide gives the appearance of a lake, bordered to its very edge with trees, through which, at intervals, are seen farmhouses and cottages, and all that brings to mind that beautiful image, "a smiling land." The position is well chosen, and it is enhanced in beauty by a small artificial pond, collected from the springs with which the hill abounds, and lying between the house and the edge of the harbor, from which it is divided by an irregular embankment, affording room for a plantation of shade-trees and fine



shrubbery. Here again Friend Richard was doing what he little thought of; for his only intention was to build a paper-mill — one of the earliest in the United States, whose wheel for many a year furnished employment to the outlet of the pond. The mill was burnt once and again — by way of hint, perhaps, that beauty is use enough; — and the visitor cannot but hope it will never be rebuilt.

The village at the head of the harbor was long called North Hempstead, but as there were already quite Hempsteads enough in Queen's county to perplex future Topographers, the inhabitants united in desiring a more distinctive title, and applied to Mr. Bryant for his aid in choosing one. This is not so easy a matter as it seems at first glance; and in defect of all express guidance in the history of the spot, and desiring, too, a name at once musical in itself and agreeable in its associations, Mr. Bryant proposed Roslyn, — the town annals declaring that when the British evacuated the island in 1781, "The Sixtieth, or Royal American Regiment, marched out of Hempstead to the tune of Roslyn Castle." The name is not too romantic for the place, for a more irregular, picturesque cluster of houses can hardly be found — perched here and there on the hillsides, embowered in foliage, and looking down upon a chain of pretty little lakes, on the outlet of which, overhanging the upper point of the harbor, is an old-fashioned mill, with its pretty rural accessories. One can hardly believe this a bit of Long Island, which is by no means famed for romantic scenery.

After Richard Kirk's time, other Quakers in succession became proprietors of the great farmhouse and the little paper-mill, but at length were purchased by Joseph W.

Moulton, Esq., author of a history of New-York, who, not relishing the plainness of the original style, surrounded the house with square columns and a heavy cornice. These help to shade a wide and ample piazza, shut in still more closely by tall trees and clustering vines, so that from within the house is one bower of greenery, and the hottest sun of July leaves the ample hall and large rooms cool and comfortable at all times.

The library occupies the northwest corner — that which in our artist's sketch appears at the left — and we need hardly say that of all the house this is the most attractive spot — not only because, besides ample store of books, it is supplied with all that can minister to quiet and refined pleasure — but because it is, *par excellence* — the haunt of the poet and his friends. Here, by the great table covered with periodicals and literary novelties, with the soft, ceaseless music of rustling leaves, and the singing of birds making the silence sweeter, the summer visitor may fancy himself in the very woods, only with a deeper and more grateful shade; and "when wintry blasts are piping loud" and the whispering leaves have changed to whirling ones, a bright wood-fire lights the home-scene, enhanced in comfort by the inhospitable sky without; and the domestic lamp calls about it a smiling or musing circle, for whose conversation or silence the shelves around afford excellent material. The collection of books is not large, but widely various; Mr. Bryant's tastes and pursuits leading him through the entire range of literature, from the Fathers to Shelley, and from Courier to Jean Paul. In German, French and Spanish, he is a proficient, and Italian he reads with ease; so all these languages are

well represented in the library. He turns naturally from the driest treatise on politics or political economy, to the wildest romance or the most tender poem — happy in a power of enjoying all that genius has created or industry achieved in literature.

The library has not, however, power to keep Mr. Bryant from the fields, in which he seeks health and pleasure a large part of every day that his editorial duties allow him to pass at home. To explore his farm, entering into the minutest details of its cultivation; to thread the beautiful woodland hill back of the house, making winding paths and shady seats to overlook the water or command the distant prospect; to labor in the garden with the perseverance of an enthusiast — these ought perhaps to be called his favorite occupations; for as literature has been the business of his life, these out-door pleasures have all the charm of contrast together with that of relaxation. It is under the open sky, and engaged in rural matters, that Mr. Bryant is seen to advantage, that is, in his true character. It is here that the amenity and natural sweetness of disposition, sometimes clouded by the cares of life and the untoward circumstances of business intercourse, shine gently forth under the influences of Nature, so dear to the heart and tranquillizing to the spirits of her child. Here the eye puts on its deeper and softer lustre, and the voice modulates itself to the tone of affection, sympathy, enjoyment. Little children cluster about the grave man's steps, or climb his shoulders in triumph; and "serenest eyes" meet his in fullest confidence, finding there none of the sternness of which casual observers sometimes complain. It seems almost a pity that other walks

should ever draw him hence; but perhaps the contrast between garden walks and city pavements is required for the perfection and durability of rural pleasures.

There can hardly be found a man who has tried active life for fifty years, yet preserved so entire and resolute a simplicity of character and habits as Mr. Bryant. No one can be less a man of the world — so far as that term expresses a worldly man — in spite of a large share of foreign travel, and extensive intercourse with society. A disposition somewhat exclusive, and a power of living self-inclosed at will, may account in part for the total failure of politics, society or ambition, to introduce any thing artificial upon a character enabled by natural courage to face opposition, and by inherent self-respect to adhere to individual tastes in spite of fashion or convention. And the simplicity which is the result of high cultivation is so much more potent than that which arises only from ignorance, that it may be doubted whether, if Mr. Bryant had never left his native village of Cummington, in the heart of Massachusetts, he would have been as free from all sophistication of taste and manners as at present. It is with no sentimental aim that we call him the child of Nature, but because he is one of the few who, by their docility and devotion, show that they are not ashamed of the great mother, or desirous to exchange her rule for something more fashionable or popular.

The father of Mr. Bryant was a man of taste and learning—a physician and an habitual student; and his mother—not to discredit the general law which gives able mothers to eminent men — was a woman of excellent understanding and high character, remarkable for judgment and decision as for

faithfulness to her domestic duties. And here, in this little Hampshire village of Cummington, — where William Cullen Bryant was born in 1794, — he began at ten years of age to write verses, which were printed in the Northampton newspaper of that day — the Hampshire Gazette. A year earlier he had written rhymes, which his father criticised and taught him to correct.

Precocity like this too often disappoints its admirers, but Bryant went on without faltering, and at fourteen wrote a satirical poem called the Embargo, which is, perhaps, one of the most wonderful performances of the kind on record. We know of nothing to compare with it except the achievements of Chatterton.

Here are a few of the lines:

"E'en while I sing, see Faction urge her claim,
Misled with falsehood, and with zeal inflame;
Lift her black banner, spread her empire wide,
And stalk triumphant with a Fury's stride.
She blows her brazen trump, and, at the sound,
A motley throng, obedient, flock around;
A mist of changing hue o'er all she flings,
And darkness perches on her dragon wings!
"O, might some patriot rise! the gloom dispel,
Chase Error's mist, and break her magic spell!
But vain the wish, for, hark! the murmuring meed
Of hoarse applause from yonder shed proceed;
Enter, and view the thronging concourse there,
Intent, with gaping mouth and stupid stare;
While, in the midst, their supple leader stands,
Harangues aloud, and flourishes his hands;
To adulation tunes his servile throat,
And sues, successful, for each blockhead's vote."

This poem was published, in company with a few shorter ones, at Boston, in 1808. Two years afterwards the author entered Williams College, a sophomore, and greatly distinguished himself during two years, at the end of which time he obtained an honorable discharge, intending to complete his education at Yale — a design which was, however, never carried into effect. He studied law, first with Judge Howe, of Washington, afterwards with Mr. William Baylies, of Bridgewater, and in 1815 was admitted to the bar at Plymouth. He practised law a single year at Plainfield, near his native place, and then removed to Great Barrington, in Berkshire, where, in 1821, he married Miss Frances Fairchild — whose portrait is exquisitely shadowed forth — to those who know her — in that tenderest, most domestic, and most personal poem that Bryant ever wrote — "The Future Life." In the whole range of English literature there can hardly be found so delicate and touching a tribute to feminine excellence — a husband's testimony after twenty years of married life, not exempt from toils and trials.

The poem of Thanatopsis was written in 1812, when the writer was eighteen, and we have heard a family friend say that when Dr. Bryant showed a copy to a lady well qualified to judge of such things, saying simply — "Here are some lines that our William has been writing," — the lady read the poem — raised her eyes to the father's face, and burst into tears — in which that father, a somewhat stern and silent man — was not ashamed to join. And no wonder! It must have seemed a mystery, as well as a joy, that in a quiet country life, in the bosom of eighteen, had grown up thoughts that even in boyhood shaped themselves into sol-

emn harmonies, majestic as the diapason of ocean, fit for a temple-service beneath the vault of heaven.

The poem of the Water Fowl was written two years after, while Mr. Bryant was reading law at Bridgewater. These verses, which are in tone only less solemn than the Thanatopsis, while they show a graphic power truly remarkable, were suggested by the actual sight of a solitary water-fowl, steadily flying towards the northwest at sunset, in a brightly illumined sky. They were published, with Thanatopsis and the Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood, in the North American Review of the year 1816.

In 1821 Mr. Bryant delivered the poem called "The Ages," before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge. At the suggestion of his friends, it was published the same year, at Cambridge, together with the three poems just mentioned, and a very few others, among which was that called Green River, which he had a short time before contributed to the Idle Man, then in course of publication by his friend Dana.

In 1824 Mr. Bryant wrote a considerable number of papers for the Literary Gazette, published in Boston; and in 1825, by the advice of his excellent and lamented friend, Henry D. Sedgwick, he removed to New-York, and became one of the editors of the New-York Review, in conjunction with Henry James Anderson. At the end of six months this gentleman, between whom and Mr. Bryant there has ever since subsisted a strong friendship, was appointed Professor of Mathematics in Columbia College, and Robert C. Sands took his place as associate editor of the Review. This Review, however, was not destined to as long a life as it

deserved — the life of Reviews as well as of men depending upon a multitude of contingencies — and at the end of the year Mr. Bryant was engaged as an assistant editor of the Evening Post. The next year he became one of the proprietors of that paper, and has so continued ever since.

In 1827, and the two years next succeeding, he found time to contribute a considerable share of the matter of an annual of superior character, called the Talisman, the whole of which was written by three persons — Sands, Verplanck, and Bryant. He also furnished several stories for a publication called "Tales of the Glauber Spa," published by the Harpers. The other writers were Miss Sedgwick, Paulding, Sands, Verplanck and Leggett. Mr. Bryant's contributions were "The Skeleton's Cave" and "Medfield."

The first general collection of his works was in 1832, when he gave to the world in one volume all the poems he was willing to acknowledge. His publisher was Mr. Elam Bliss, now no more, a man of whose sterling goodness Mr. Bryant loves to speak, as eminent for exemplary liberality in dealings, and for a most kind and generous disposition. It was for him that the Talisman was written.

In 1834 Mr. Bryant sailed with his family for Europe, leaving the Evening Post in the charge of his friend Leggett. His residence abroad was mostly in Italy and Germany, both of which countries he found too interesting for a mere glance. Here the pleasure and improvement of himself and his family would have detained him full three years — the allotted period of his sojourn abroad — but news of Mr. Leggett's illness and of some disadvantage arising from it in the affairs of the paper, compelled him to return

home suddenly in 1836, leaving his family to follow at more leisure under the care of Mr. Longfellow, who had been abroad at the same time. The business aspect of the Post was unpromising enough at this juncture, but sound judgment and patient labor succeeded, in time, in restoring it to the prosperous condition which it has enjoyed for half a century.

In 1842 appeared "The Fountain and other Poems," gravely sweet, like their predecessors, and breathing of Nature and green fields, in spite of editorial and pecuniary cares. In 1843 Mr. Bryant refreshed himself by a visit to the Southern States, and passed a few weeks in East Florida. The "White Footed Deer," with several other poems, was published a year after. In 1845 Mr. Bryant visited England, Scotland, and the Shetland Isles, for the first time; and during the next year a new collection was made of his poems, with the outward garnish of mechanical elegance, and also numerous illustrations by Leutze. This edition, published at Philadelphia, is enriched with a beautiful portrait by Cheney — the best, in our opinion, ever yet published. This graceful and delicate head, with its fine, classic outline, in which taste and sensitiveness are legible at a glance, has a singular resemblance to the engraved portraits of Rubens, taken in a half Spanish hat of wavy outline, such as Mr. Bryant is fond of wearing in his wood-rambles. Add the hat to this exquisite miniature of Cheney's, and we have Rubens complete — an odd enough resemblance, when we contrast the productions of the painter and the poet.

Only one still more characteristic and perfect likeness of Bryant exists — the full-length in Durand's picture of the

poet standing with his friend Cole — the eminent landscape-painter — among the Catskill woods and waterfalls. This picture is particularly to be prized, not only for the sweetness and truth of its general execution, but because it gives us the poet and the painter where they loved best to be, and just as they were when under the genial influence and in the complete ease of such scenes. Such pictures are half biographies.

In 1848 Cole died, and Mr. Bryant, from a full heart, pronounced his funeral oration. Friendship is truly the wine of the poet's life, and Cole was a beloved friend. If Mr. Bryant ever appears stern or indifferent, it is not when speaking or thinking of the loved and lost. No man chooses his friends more carefully — none prizes them dearer or values their society more — none does them more generous and delicate justice. Such attachment cannot afford to be indiscriminate.

March, 1849, saw Mr. Bryant in Cuba, and in the summer of the same year he visited Europe for the third time. The letters written during his various journeys and voyages were collected and published in the year 1850, by Mr. Putnam, a volume embodying a vast amount of practical and poetic thought, expressed with the united modesty and good sense that so eminently characterize every production of Mr. Bryant; — not a superfluous word, — not an empty or a showy remark. As a writer of pure, manly, straightforward English, Mr. Bryant has few equals and no superiors among us.

In the beginning of 1852, on the occasion of the public commemoration held in honor of the genius and worth of James Fenimore Cooper, and in view of a monument to be

erected in New-York to that great American novelist, Mr. Bryant pronounced a Discourse on his Life and Writings, marked by the warmest appreciation of his claims to the remembrance and gratitude of his country. Some even of Mr. Cooper's admirers objected that the poet had assigned a higher niche to his old friend than the next century will be willing to award him; if it be so, perhaps the peculiarly manly and bold character of Cooper's mind gave him an unsuspected advantage in Mr. Bryant's estimation. He looked upon him, it may be, as a rock of truth and courage in the midst of a fluctuating sea of "dilletantism" and time-serving, and valued him with unconscious reference to this particular quality, so rare and precious. But the discourse was an elegant production, and a new proof of the generosity with which Mr. Bryant, who never courts praise, is disposed to accord it.

Mr. Bryant's habits of life have a smack of asceticism, although he is the disciple of none of the popular schools which, under various forms, claim to rule the present world in that direction. Milk is more familiar to his lips than wine, yet he does not disdain the "cheerful hour" over which moderation presides. He eats sparingly of animal food, but he is by no means afraid to enjoy roast goose lest he should outrage the manes of his ancestors, like some modern enthusiasts. He "hears no music" if it be fantastical, yet his ear is finely attuned to the varied harmonies of wood and wave. His health is delicate, yet he is almost never ill; his life laborious, yet carefully guarded against excessive and exhausting fatigue. He is a man of rule, but none the less tolerant of want of method in others; strictly

self-governed, but not prone to censure the unwary or the weak-willed. In religion he is at once catholic and devout, and to moral excellence no soul bows lower. Placable we can perhaps hardly call him, for impressions on his mind are almost indelible; but it may with the strictest truth be said, that it requires a great offence, or a great unworthiness, to make an enemy of him, so strong is his sense of justice. Not amid the bustle and dust of the political arena, cased in armor offensive and defensive, is a champion's more intimate self to be estimated, but in the pavilion or the bower, where, in robes of ease, and with all professional ferocity laid aside, we see his natural form and complexion, and hear in placid domestic tones the voice so lately thundering above the fight. So we willingly follow Mr. Bryant to Roslyn; see him musing on the pretty rural bridge that spans the fish-pond; or taking the oar in his daughter's fairy boat; or pruning his trees; or talking over farming matters with his neighbors; or — to return to the spot whence we set out some time ago — sitting calm and happy in that pleasant library, surrounded by the friends he loves to draw about him, or listening to the prattle of infant voices, quite as much at home there as under their own more especial roof — his daughter's, within the same inclosure.

In person Mr. Bryant is tall and slender, symmetrical and well-poised; in carriage eminently firm and self-possessed. He is fond of long rural walks and of gymnastic exercises — on all which his health depends. Poetical composition tries him severely — so severely that his efforts of that kind are necessarily rare. His are no holiday-verses; and those who urge his producing a long poem are, perhaps,

Shall then come forth to wear
the glory and the beauty of its prime.

They have not perished, no!
Kind words, remembered voices, once so sweet,
radiant long ago
Smiles of the friendly brow
And features the great soul's apparent seat.

Come back
All shall return, each tie
Of pure affection shall be knit again.
Alone shall Evil die
And Sorrow dwell, a prisoner in thy reign.

Bryant: from "the Past"

W. C. Bryant

proposing that he should, in gratifying their admiration, build for himself a monument in which he would be self-enveloped. Let us rather content ourselves with asking "a few more of the same," especially of the later poems, in which, certainly, the poet trusts his fellows with a nearer and more intimate view of his inner and peculiar self than was his wont in earlier times. Let him more and more give a human voice to woods and waters; and, in acting as the accepted interpreter of Nature, speak fearlessly to the heart as well as to the eye. His countrymen were never more disposed to hear him with delight; for since the public demand for his poems has placed a copy in every house in the land, the taste for them has steadily increased, and the national pride in the writer's genius become a generous enthusiasm, which is ready to grant him an apotheosis while he lives.

George Bancroft.

BANCROFT.

THE Indians called the finest of New England rivers, Connecticut, River of Pines. The summer tourist to the White Mountains, ascending or descending its valley, finds little reason for the name remaining, until he reaches its upper shores, where occasional groves of pines remind him of the name and its significance. A broad, tranquil stream, it flows through much of the most characteristic scenery of the Northern States, from out the "crystal hills,"—from the shadow of Agiocochook, "throne of the Great Spirit," as the Indians called Mount Washington, dividing New Hampshire from Vermont, the granite from the green,—beneath graceful Ascutney Mountain at Windsor, through wide-waving grain-fields, foaming over the rocks in its sole important cascade at Bellows Falls, then into a broader and more open landscape as it crosses Massachusetts, making at Northampton its famous bend—the Great Ox-bow. At Springfield the railways from every quarter meet upon its banks, and its calm breadth here,

with the low clustering foliage of its shores, and the bold cliff of Mount Tom glimmering in the hazy noon, which is the hour of arrival at Springfield, gives the tone to the day's impression. The traveller southward follows the stream toward Hartford and New Haven ; the northern traveller clings to its shore until he reaches Northampton.

Lying in the heart of Massachusetts, Northampton is one of the most beautiful of country towns. Looking over a quiet and richly cultivated landscape, the view from Mount Holyoke is of the same quality as that from Richmond Hill, in England. Gentle green hills, fair and fertile meadows, watered by the River of Pines. That river is not classic Thames, and no grotesque Strawberry Hill nor historic Hampden Court, no Pope's Villa at Twickenham nor stately Bushy Park, tell tales to the musing eye of the singularly artificial and amusing life which is so strangely and intimately associated with the graceful English scene. The River of Pines laves its peaceful shores with Indian lore. Terrible traditions of the fights of the early settlers of New England haunt the stream. Historic life in its neighborhood is not old enough to be artificial. Like much of our pastoral scenery, which seems the natural theatre of tranquil life and a long Arcadian antiquity, the landscape of the Connecticut, so far as it is suggestive, reminds the observer only of the dull monotony of savage existence ; but, — irresistibly as the stream flows to the sea, — bears imagination forward to the history that shall be. Alone of all scenery in the world, the American landscape points to the future. The best charm of the

European and Asian lies much in its reference to the past. Human interest invests it all.

> "The mountains look on Marathon,
> And Marathon looks on the sea."

But that sea is not only a sublime waste of waters, with the inherent character of every grand natural feature, but it teems and sparkles all over with another spell. And this charm is undeniable. The pass of Leonidas is more interesting than the Notch of the White Mountains, because man is the master of nature, and wherever human character has entwined itself with natural beauty, it becomes an inseparable element of enjoyment in the scene, and an element which enhances the dignity of the landscape. Thus in Concord, the spot upon the river's bank where the battle was fought, is lovely and tranquil, but how much lovelier — not as water and foliage, but as feeling and inspiration, which is the immortal beauty of landscape — for the remembrance of the human valor which consecrates it, and its significance and results.

No man, of course, grieves that American scenery is not generally invested with this character. Born upon this superb continent, heaped at intervals with the inarticulate mounds of extinct races, yet races which have left no historic trace, and can never be more than romantically interesting, we are fed upon the literature and history of the world. The grandeur of Egypt, the grace of Greece, the heroism of Rome, are all ours, and the lands illustrated by that various character do not fail to fascinate us. But at present our landscape is not unlike the Indian himself. It

is grand but silent; or eloquent only with speechless implication. Foreign critics complain that we are enamored of foreign scenery, and do not know our own wealth. But our admiration for the old world is only our homage to that human genius which shall make our own story as splendid. Seeing what it has elsewhere done, we perceive more truly what, in a sphere so stately and spacious, it will yet accomplish. A Greece more Greek and a more Roman Rome, is the possible future of America. Why are they so jealous of our delight in the Parthenon — in the Alps — in the Italian pictures? Shall we not honor the flowering of the power that ornamented the old lands and times, when we look to its future blossoming for our own glory? We prospectively honor ourselves in respecting the old world. And if, sometimes, the youth of a sensitive and delicate temperament, fully capable of enjoying to the utmost the resources of European life, and requiring the successes of art and the convenience of an old civilization for the happiest play of his powers, longs for the galleries, the societies, the historic shores, it may well be pardoned to him, in consideration that he is an indication of our capacity for that condition. He shows what we shall be, — he shows that not only the genius of creation, but of appreciation, is part of our constitution.

When, however, this peculiarity takes the form of a querulous fastidiousness, and, in Broadway, sighs for the Boulevards, and, remembering St. Peter's, sneers at the Capitol, it is foolish and offensive. But, on the other hand, we shall not necessarily improve our nationality by perpetually visiting Niagara or reading Mr. Schoolcraft's Legends, or refus

ing assent to the positive superiorities of other countries and times. Essentially eclectic in our origin, we shall be so in our development. Foreign critics treat us as if we had not a common ancestry with them, but were descended from the Indians. They say to us, — How are you ever to have a nationality, if you desert all your traditions and devote yourselves to loving and imitating Europe? The question is fair, but the implication is unjust. They forget, especially the English critics, that our difference is not absolute and final, but only relative. We have the same history and language with them. Their men and events are peculiarly ours, more, that is, than Italian and Patagonian events and men, and our literature, which they so obstreporously insist must be national, necessarily has a family likeness to their own. Many of our books imitate English books just as they imitate each other. The reason is in the common language and the similarity of habit of thought.

But no American need tremble lest the grandeur of his country should fail to be expressed in Art and Literature. Some Homer, or Poet along whose lines shall flash and roar our boundless sea; some Plato, or Catholic Philosopher, in whose calm wisdom the breadth of a continent shall repose; some artist, who shall passionately dash upon immortal canvas the fervor of our tropics, and realize in new and unimagined grace the hints of forest and prairie — these must all be, or the conditions of human and national development as they appear in history, will not be fulfilled.

Certainly, looking from Holyoke, no man grieves that the Connecticut is not the classic Thames, nor that the Great Ox-bow is unadorned by Strawberry Hill. Nor do I sup-

pose that he regrets upon the hill the absence of the dandies who composed the court of "the first gentleman in Europe," nor that of the Dutch royalty of his three predecessors. Fortunately for us, this law of association works both ways. Horace Walpole in the country, tormenting it with his fantastic fancies, is almost as incongruous a spectacle as Beau Nash by the seaside. But it is the glowing line of history in which these figures are insignificant, that imparts the charm. The elegance of extreme refinement marks the pleasant view from Richmond Hill. It is akin in impression to that of the "lovely London ladies." It is in landscape what they are in society. But pastoral peace broods over the valley of the River of Pines. Golden plenty waves in its meadows, — the flowing tresses of a peasant. Gentle mountains undulate around, covered with green woods. A fresh sweetness and virginal purity every where breathe a benediction. If no historic heroism inspires the mind of the spectator, there is also no taint of sheer artificiality, none of the nameless sadness which haunts the gallery of King Charles's Beauties. This is Nell Gwyn, the ruddy orange-girl, her youth and heart sweeter than the fruit she bore; not the painted and brocaded lady, not the frail but faithful St. Albans.

Looking from the piazza of this house at Round Hill, the eye grasps grim Monadnoc at the north, and the Yankee hills of Connecticut, made poetic by distance. A tranquil and friendly landscape, — somewhat lurid in our early history with Indian fires and desolations,—a broad, fair river,—altogether a fine and suggestive emblem of our condition and resources, it is pleasant to associate with Northampton the

commencement of the work that records our history in a manner which secures its final permanence. It is fortunate that it was written now, while the outlines are not lost in the mist of antiquity, and by one who, to an original, clear and profound perception of the great principles which appear in the development of the race, has added the ripeness of rich scholarship, long foreign residence, and that invaluable practical acquaintance with men and affairs, which has made his own life part of contemporary history. Best of all for the purpose, the ineradicable Americanism of the historian imparts his native air to the page. It is not only a History of America, it is an American History. There is a wild vigor and luxuriant richness in its style of treatment, a proud buoyancy of flow, as if it shared the energetic career of the country it describes. The intellectual habit evident throughout is precisely that required of a historian, not so romantic as to limit the story to a sweet and captivating legend, nor so academic as to marshal in colorless masses the hosts of historic facts. It has no withered, scholastic air. The historian has not curiously culled flowers, and offered them to us pressed, — but with generous hands he gathers all the bounties of the field and heaps them before us, wet with morning dew.

Our present duty is not with the work, but with the circumstances which the work has made interesting. Born near Worcester, Massachusetts, Mr. Bancroft was the son of the Rev. Aaron Bancroft, one of the most distinguished Unitarian divines of the last half century. In his house the religion learned from his lips by his children was of that grave and humane catholicity which, once permeating the

young mind, sweetens the man's life for ever after. Freedom of inquiry,—the supremest liberty of moral investigation, was the golden rule of the old man's life. "Prove all things," was the earnest exhortation of his preaching, sure that otherwise there would be little good to hold fast. When, in the declining years of his life, an intellectual and moral excitement, known as Transcendentalism, prevailed in New England, and many good men of his own persuasion fancied that the foundations of things were at last succumbing, the old clergyman went his way quite unperplexed, sympathized with the spirit, although not with the result of the investigation, and assured his alarmed friends that the errors, if such they were, would necessarily pass, and that all grain of truth grew in husks.

At seventeen years of age our historian went to Germany and studied at Göttingen. Like all ardent and serious New England youths, his interest in theological speculations was great, and he often preached to the quiet German country congregations around Göttingen, in their native tongue. This interest was the puritanical inheritance of his native land. The small towns were parishes, and the minister the high priest. It had been so from the earliest times, and the feeling in the matter, which survived until a quarter of a century since, clearly manifested the fact that the emigration of the pilgrims and the settlement of New England was a religious movement. Possibly, seen from Göttingen, the theological traditions of New England might lose some of their awful proportions. In the pleasant pulpits of Boston the observer might not always see the Cotton

Mathers, and other clerical Boanerges of the elder day, nor trace in their limpid discourse the fiery torrent of Puritan preaching. But the spirit of inquiry inculcated by the father, the pastor of the quiet country town, was sure to preserve the inquirer by neither exaggerating nor threatening. The young man pursued his studies with ardor, in every direction. His penetrant mind, contrasting the European habit of education with our own, perceived where ours failed, and what it was necessary to do to elevate our standard in the matter. Of singular intellectual restlessness, his mind bounded and darted through the fields of scholastic culture, hiving the sweets, quite ignorant yet of their probable or final use.

During his residence in Germany, the young American student, bringing to the Savans of that country the homage of a fame they did not know to exist, was doubly welcome. In Berlin he knew Schleirmacher, Wolffe and Savigny. It was in Jena that he first saw Goethe. The old man was walking in his garden in the morning, clad with German carelessness, in heavy loose coat and trowsers, without a waistcoat. He had the imperial presence which is preserved in all the statues and pictures, and talked pleasantly of many things as they strolled. Lord Byron was then at the height of his fame. Goethe asked of him with interest, and said, although without passion or ill-feeling, that the English poet had modelled his Manfred upon Faust. In this remark, however, Goethe showed more the pride of the author than the perception of the critic. For the theme attempted in both poems is precisely the one sure to fascinate all genius of a certain power, and the

treatment in these especial instances reveals all the differences of the men.

Afterward, in Italy, our student saw Lord Byron. He first met him on board of one of our national vessels lying at Leghorn, and to which the poet had been invited. As he mounted the side of the ship, Byron's eye fell upon a group of ladies, and he wavered a moment, saying afterward that he feared they were English, toward whom, at that time, he was not friendly. He advanced down the deck, however, glad to learn that the dreadful cloud of muslin enveloped nothing but Americans, and fell into animated conversation.

"Ah! Lord Byron," said one of the fairest of the group, "when I return to America no one will believe that I have actually seen you. I must carry them some tangible proof of my good fortune. Will you give me the rose in your button-hole?"

The "free and independent" address did not displease the poet, and he gave the rose.

Upon leaving the vessel, Lord Byron asked Mr. Bancroft to visit him at his villa, Montenero, near the city, to which, a day or two after, he went. They talked of many things, Lord Byron naturally asking endless questions of America. He denied the charge of Goethe about Manfred, and said that he had never read Faust. He had just written the letter upon Pope, and, in conversation, greatly extolled his poetry. Without saying brilliant or memorable things, Byron was a fluent and agreeable talker. It was in the year 1821, and he was writing Don Juan. "People call it immoral," said he, "and put Roderick Random in their libra-

ries." So of Shelley: "They call him an infidel," said Lord Byron, "but he is more Christian than the whole of them." When his visitor rose to leave, the poet took down a volume containing the last cantos he had then written of the poem, and wrote his name in them, as a remembrance "from Noel Byron." But Ambrosia was that day allotted to the young American, for as they passed slowly through the saloon, the host bade him tarry a moment, and leaving the room immediately returned with the Countess Guiccioli. She, too, smiled, and gliding into the mazy music of Italian speech, led the listener on, delighted. Again he rose to go, but a servant threw open a door and discovered a collation spread in the adjoining room. Perhaps the poet pleased himself with the fancy of graciously and profusely entertaining his foreign subjects in the ambassadorial person of his guest. "That is fame," he said, upon reading in some tourist's volume that a copy of the English Bards and Scotch Reviewers had been found by him at Niagara. The modesty of his American visitor might recognize in the cordiality of his reception and treatment Lord Byron's acknowledgment of his American fame.

In 1822 Mr. Bancroft returned home, and served for a year as Greek tutor in Harvard College. During his long residence in Europe he had matured his projects to raise the standard of education in America, and in the following year he, with Mr. Cogswell, now Librarian of the Astor Library, commenced the famous Round Hill School at Northampton. Three brothers Shepard, descendants of the old New England divine, had built three neighboring houses upon this spot. Gradually they had all passed into the hands of one

of them, who was willing to sell them, and they became the seat of the school. The estate comprised about fifty acres. The school was immediately filled by young men from every part of the country, and took rank directly among the finest institutions. Mr. Bancroft devoted himself with unremitting ardor to the enterprise. The system of study pursued at the best schools in the world was introduced, and the scheme was, in itself, completely successful. Unhappily, however, there was no Oxford and no Cambridge for this Eton. The course of study was so high and entire that the graduates of Round Hill were well fitted to enter the advanced classes of any College. But, by a singular provision of College Laws, those who entered an advanced class were held to pay for the preceding years. Nor did the studies in any College carry the student forward to a proportioned result. Shrewd men did not want to pay twice for their sons' education. Besides, it was a solitary effort,—possibly some wild whim thought the shrewd men, of this deeply-dyed German stu dent. Thus, although in itself successful, it did not promise to achieve the desired result, like a very perfect blossom, which will yet not ripen into a fruit. Mr. Bancroft's interest in it, therefore, gradually declined.

Meanwhile he had served other aims by translating his friend Heeren's History of Greece, and had been long meditating and preparing the material for a History of the United States. In 1827 he was married at Springfield, and returning to Northampton resumed his connection with the School simply as a teacher, and presently withdrew from it altogether. In the house represented in the engraving the first volume of the History was written, and published in



the year 1834. The historian then removed to Springfield, where he resided two years, completing and publishing another volume there.

It was a favorite maxim of Ariosto, and of Lord Byron, that every man of letters must mix in affairs, if he would secure a profound influence upon men. Only by contact, they felt, does man learn to know man. The wandering Homer, the actor Shakspeare, the statesman Milton, Lord Bacon, the privy councillor Goethe, Michael Angelo planning fortifications for Florence, Leonardo da Vinci designing drains for the Lombardy plains, are names upon their side. It is easy to see how invaluable to a historian must be this practical intercourse with men and affairs, of whose development history is the record. Mr. Bancroft's political career, therefore, is not only a remarkable illustration of the successes opened in a republic to ability and energy, but it has necessarily been of the profoundest influence upon his work. A man who makes part of the history of his own time can better write that of another. While still resident at Northampton, he was, quite unwittingly upon his part, elected a representative to the General Court, but his engagements prevented his taking his seat. Other positions were offered him, which he declined. Appointed Collector of Boston in 1838, by President Van Buren, Mr. Bancroft brought to his new duties an intelligence and zeal which secured the acknowledgment of great ability from very determined opponents. He was again married at this time; and, during the engrossing engagements of his office he labored diligently upon the third volume of the history, which was published in 1842. In the year 1844 he was nominated for Governor

by the democratic party. He was not elected, although receiving a larger vote than had ever before been polled upon the purely democratic issue. Party spirit did not spare any prominent man, and plenty of hard things were said during the contest. But in the excited moments of political difference, although great talent is often conceded to opponents, integrity and kindliness of heart are as often denied. Throughout a canvass of great acerbity of feeling, the democratic nominee was in New-York, engaged in examining, often for more than the twelve hours of day, the documents illustrative of our early history, which Mr. Brodhead had then just brought from Holland for the Historical Society of his State.

In 1844 Mr. Polk was elected President, and summoned Mr. Bancroft to Washington as Secretary of the Navy, and in the autumn of 1846, he crossed the ocean as Minister to England. When Rubens, the painter, resided in England as Dutch Ambassador, a company of diplomats one day called upon him and found him, pallette in hand, at work before his easel.

"Ah!" said they, "Monsieur the Ambassador is playing painter."

"No, gentlemen," responded the artist, "the painter is playing Ambassador."

So our historian played Ambassador, and played it well. Upon leaving Washington he said to the President that he should devote his energies to the modification of the Navigation Act, and his success in the effort is one of the chief triumphs of Mr. Bancroft's political career. He did not arrive as a stranger in London, but the scholars

there, and the learned representatives of other countries, were already correspondents of the American scholar and loyal to the fame of the American historian. We have had no foreign representative more genuinely American. Still devoted to the aim of his life, — by personal intercourse with eminent men and close examination of all material accessible in England, by constant correspondence with other parts of Europe, especially France, and frequent visits to Paris to explore its libraries and search its archives, the History of the United States went on. In 1849 Mr. Bancroft returned to the United States, and took up his residence in New-York. The fourth volume of the history, comprising the French war and the beginnings of our revolution, was immediately prepared for the press and published by his old publishers, in Boston, in the spring of 1852. Its success, after so long and highly-wrought expectation, was entire, and confirmed the satisfaction that the history of our country was to be recorded by a mind so sagacious, so cognizant of the national ideas, so receptive of the national spirit, so affluent in historic lore, so moulded by intercourse and attrition with great times and their greatest men, so capable of expression at once rich, vigorous, and characteristic.

Mr. Bancroft's time is now divided between the city and the seaside. Early in the summer he repairs to Newport, and were the date of our book somewhat later, we might enrich our pages with an engraving of the house he is now building there. It will be a simple, summer retreat, lying upon the seaward slope of the cliff. From his windows he will look down upon the ocean, and as he breathes its air,

impart its freshness and vigor to his pages. The fifth volume of the history is now printing. It will comprise the first events of the greatest epoch of modern times. Nor is it possible to say to how late a date the work will be continued. The great result of independence once achieved, the consequent organization of details can hardly be properly or copiously treated, until the mind can clearly trace the characteristic operation of principles through a somewhat longer course of years.

for submissive". Especially, Robinson, the speaker, already a defaulter protected ~~favored by the crown officers~~ the well-informed, ~~Puritan~~ John + Randolph, ~~the well informed jurist~~ now king's attorney general, and George ~~W~~ the frank & honest a independent George Wythe, a lover of classic learning, accustomed to ~~lecy~~ guide the house by his ~~powerful~~ strong understanding and single minded character, exerted all their powers of persuasion" in opposition to the hot and virulent integrity resolutions." But on the other side George Johnston, of Fairfax, reasoned with solidity and firmness; while Henry flamed with impassioned zeal. Lifted beyond himself, by ~~his vehement nature~~ of

"Treason", shouted the speaker, "Treason, treason", was echoed ~~the~~ around the house; while Henry ~~never faltering~~, fixing his eye on the first interruptor, continued without faltering, — "may profit by their example". *

Swayed by his words, the Committee of the whole ~~plainly accepted as their opinions the resolves~~ showed its good will to the spirit of all the resolutions enumerated; but the five ~~resolutions~~ of Patrick Henry were alone reported to the House on Thursday the thirtieth of May, and having been adopted by a small majority, the ~~Assembly voted Peyton Randolph's copy only. Henry's Resolves Compose~~

* Letter from Virginia of 4th June 1765. in Newport Gazettes of 13 August, 1765. & in General Advertiser & New York Mercury & Gazette 31 October 1765.

Bancroft: From "History of the United States, Vol. V. (unpublished)"

Richard H. Dana.



DANA.

CAPE ANN would almost appear to have been designed by Nature to afford a home to a poet; and especially to a poet like DANA, who has always been a lover of the coast scenery of his native New England, and whose genius has contributed so much to invest it with ideal beauty. For here, within the easy limits of morning drives, may be seen all the varieties of land and sea that give a peculiar picturesqueness to these shores, from Portland round to Newport. Added to this, the country inland is broken into hills, rocks, dells, meadows, woodlands, farms, and fields, in the most charmingly confused manner imaginable; the landscapes change every moment, and there are never wanting new ones enough to last till it becomes pleasant to revisit those with which the eye is familiar. The old roads wind in and out and up and down with a most alluring sinuosity; I know of one where for nearly five miles the forest trees almost join hands overhead, and the curves are calculated upon such exceedingly short radii (to borrow a phrase of the railway en-

gineers) that one can never see more than a hundred rods in advance; for the next five miles the way goes over high granite rolling hills, with magnificent ocean views from their bare summits, and deep green vales between, lined with orchards, cornfields, and meadows, and thickly sown with ancient farmhouses. This is near Squam Ferry, as the road goes towards Essex. If he chooses, the explorer may turn aside through a gateway, and a mile or two over loose sand and sand-cliffs, that look like huge snow-drifts, will bring him to a desolate peninsular beach, that stretches away, I know not how far, to the northward. This beach is one of the finest, and by fishermen one of the most dreaded on the coast; it is very wide, and as smooth and almost as hard as a marble floor; the sand in the distance appears almost perfectly white. Somewhere on it is a buried farm, but the peninsula is now uninhabited, and accessible only at one extremity. To ride or walk on this apparently interminable waste, with no companion but the marching waves, that loom up so threateningly, and seem so loudly impatient for another victim that one becomes almost afraid of them, is not the least of Cape Ann's poetical attractions to "the man of fine feeling, and deep and delicate and creative thought:"—such an one as the Idle Man has identified himself with by the very substance and eloquence of his description, in the essay he has entitled "Musings."

In another direction, the road which leads to the beautifully situated old town of Gloucester, and thence goes quite round the shore of the Cape, offers views no less various and interesting. Rock, beach, headland and island alternate with each other for the whole distance; and the gen-

eral sterility of the scenery, with the sense of loneliness and desolation it inspires, reach a climax at the extremity or "pitch of the Cape," where Thatcher's Island with its cold lighthouses stands out into the Atlantic surges. Further round, towards Rockport, are some high hills, from which the ocean appears almost encircling the horizon; broad and blue, of that deep ultramarine hue peculiar to our northern waters, it rises upward half-way to the sky, and the distant sails which dot it over literally "hang in the clouds." I shall always remember one early morning here, when the breeze blew fresh and the white-caps gleamed in the latter dawning; the horizon line was as clear as in a picture, and the surf was foaming joyfully upon the ledges. Some of the precipices here and elsewhere on the Cape are not excelled for grandeur by those of Nahant.

Rockport is in itself a curiosity — a little thriving village stretched along a narrow shore, and just able to preserve itself from being washed into the deep. A strong sea-wall scarcely protects a little basin of a harbor, in which some fifty fishing schooners are usually lying. Many of the immense blocks of granite composing this wall were moved from their places in the great gale of 1851, and the whole would have probably gone had the gale continued another tide. Beyond, and forming a part of Rockport, is Pigeon Cove, where are extensive granite quarries, hewn into the pine-covered cliffs. The scenery here will bear Othello's description: —

"Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven."

Or if the whole of Cape Ann were to be described in

brief, it could hardly be more aptly done than in the language of one who has profited by an observation of American scenery which the perplexed Othello could hardly have enjoyed: —

> "The hills
> Rock-ribb'd, and ancient as the sun — the vales
> Stretching in pensive quietness between;
> The venerable woods — rivers that move
> In majesty, and the complaining brooks
> That make the meadows green; and pour'd round all
> Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste."

Such is the vicinity in which DANA has found a home congenial with his spirit. But I know not how to describe it, or how to speak of him in connection with it, except by drawing from the actual. Let me then, as necessary to the purpose, beg the reader's indulgence in asking him to transport himself to the place where I am at this moment writing. It is an old farmhouse, about four miles by the road from Dana's residence, though but for the projecting ledges and deeply indented coves it would be much nearer. From my window, looking westward over the meadows near the shore, I can almost see there. It is a bright August morning; so calm that the swell is scarce audible on the beautiful willow-lined beach just below me. Looking seaward are the rocky islets visible from Mr. Dana's house, and the high point on which stands a solitary oak, long a watcher over the waters, but blasted the early part of this summer by lightning; inland are meadows and far-off farmhouses, with deep green-wooded hills in the distance. Around me all is

still and singing in the hot sun; except only the threshers, who are making a rural sound in yonder barn.

Let each of my readers "play with his fancy" and think he hears with me the noise of a carriage jolting along down the long lane that leads here, where carriage seldom comes. It approaches — nearer — and now it ceases on the green-sward under the window. We look out and perceive a plain country double-seated wagon, in which are a gentleman and two little girls. He is preparing to descend, and I, recognizing him, go down to meet him. We find an elderly gentleman of sixty or thereabout, with a countenance bearing the marks of care and thought, but having a most pleasant half sad expression; a voice of peculiar sympathetic quality, and a manner very frank and simple, yet conveying an impression of singular refinement. Beyond this there is little to notice, except that he is somewhat under the middle height, unusually square-shouldered, and wears a loose brown linen frock and a palm-leaf hat evidently designed to keep the sun off.

This is the author of the "Buccaneer," "Paul Felton," and numerous other poems and prose writings, which have enriched his country's literature, by tending to make nature and art more beautiful, truth and purity of heart more lovely, and faith in Christianity stronger.

We will now, at his invitation, step in and ride over with him to dine — premising, however, that the reader shall expect no set conversation, poetical, critical, or other, beyond what might naturally suggest itself to thinking and educated persons, long acquainted, and experienced in life, driving along an old country road, with children in charge,

as full of questions and sage observations as any this hemisphere and age can probably produce.

The last half mile of the road is in a wood, where we come to a gate which lets us into the poet's grounds, the wood still continuing along the base of a hill. At length we emerge upon an open lawn and see the house. We soon reach it, and leaving our horse (a quiet, contemplative animal, by the way,) to the care of an Exile of Erin, we enter the hall. The doors are open, and we perceive directly before and beneath us the ocean. Passing through, we see at a glance that the lawn on which the house stands shelves off a few rods in front of it, in an almost perpendicular gravelly cliff, about sixty feet above a smooth sandy beach. The edge of this cliff is fringed by the remains of an old wall covered with a growth of bushes and low trees, which reaches also to the beach down the cliff's face. The beach is almost a perfect semicircle, of about a third of a mile in extent, and is perfectly isolated; on the right by "Eagle Head," a projecting ledge that makes out beyond it into the sea, and on the left by "Shark's Mouth," the precipitous base of the hill round which we lately passed. The house stands on a line with the beach, that is, nearly south, and the hill, covered with a thick growth of wood, encircles the lawn round the north, an effectual barrier to the cold winds, which come chiefly from that quarter. A still further protection is afforded by a high wooded island of considerable extent, which belongs to the estate, and lies perhaps a hundred rods from just within the base of the hill, and seems placed there as a shelter to the beach.

But it is still early in the day, and the family not having

yet assembled, our host, after hearing us exhaust the various expressions of "How beautiful!" and the like, which the first view of the place draws from every visitor, leaves us to enjoy it for a while by ourselves. It will be a convenient opportunity to mention what I have learnt of the history and topography of the estate.

It originally belonged to a man named Graves, and the island and beach are still called by his name on the maps. He had been a shipmaster, and long after him there was a tradition to the effect that he had here buried doubloons. The money-diggers tried to find them, but their success or failure still remains a question for antiquaries. The estate contains a little over one hundred acres of woods, beach, rocks, island, and land capable of cultivation. We observe how the beach is shut in by the rocks and island. This beach is the only one in the vicinity that is private property.

In Massachusetts the townships were originally granted to their proprietors, *in common*, and then by them assigned and subdivided. Certain pasture lands, and the beaches, were usually not assigned, and were still held in common. The control over these vested in the legal voters of the towns in which they were situated. This is the case with Boston Common, and with nearly all the beaches in the State. Graves's beach, however, partly from its being shut in by its headlands, but chiefly from its connection at low tide with the island, which has always been private property, passed to the owner of the upland; and all the deeds run to low-water mark. So that both legally and practically it is private property and belongs to the estate.

We are, as we see, on the south shore of Cape Ann, and protected by many miles of land and wooded hills on the north and east. The south winds, which are the hot ones inland in summer, are cooled by coming from off the water. The trees, which grow quite down to the beach, so that we might stand under thick foliage, with flowers under foot, and throw pebbles into the ocean, show how much the severity of the "east winds" is here mitigated by the shelter of the hills.

Yonder rocky headland, to the eastward, is "Norman's Woe," celebrated in Longfellow's ballad. At the right we may see from these windows the lighthouses at the entrances of Salem, Boston, and Marblehead harbors. Behind us, about a mile distant, is the village of Manchester, with its little harbor and creek. We are south of the Gloucester and Boston road, which bounds the estate on the north. Before it was purchased by Mr. Dana, the property had lain quite wild, and there are still crows, hawks, &c., in plenty, with an occasional visit from an eagle. How near the beach that wild duck ventures! He seems to be aware that here there is no danger. Even the "little beach birds," which are esteemed such a delicacy that they are shot without mercy every where else, here find a spot where they may forage and twitter, and wing their short unsteady flights without molestation.

The estate was purchased by Mr. Dana by the sale of a part of his inherited property in Cambridge, and the house was built by him. It has been suffered to remain, except levelling the lawn, and setting a few spruces where they were rather needed as screens to the stable and out-build-

ings than for ornament, as nearly as possible in its original condition. But the thick underwood of the hill has been hewn into little paths leading to the open summit by various routes, and to the points where the best views may be had of the land and ocean. Some of these are very fine, and have been commemorated, it is said, by sketches not less so.

While we are making these observations, our host reappears divested of his rustic garb, and we take chairs and seat ourselves under the broad piazza. Our talk is of old times, and modern times, the things that have been and are, and are likely to be hereafter — a range of subjects much more extensive, in fact, than that proposed by Talkative, in Bunyan. It might be thought, from the finish and care shown in his writings, that Dana would be reserved in conversation, or at least didactic. But it is not so. His conversation is free, genial, discursive, abounding in acute observation of life, in apt anecdote, and, what may be thought hardly possible by those who have only known him as a poet and author, in humor. His sense of the ridiculous is no less keen than his perception of beauty; and he passes from one to the other with the freedom of a reflective mind, and a rapidity which, while it is perfectly natural and consistent with true emotion, sometimes has a strange effect upon the nerves of those who have not been in the habit of coming in contact with a mind of such calibre. Let a formal character, accustomed to run in a certain roadway of thought, stray into his society when he is in his arm-chair with two or three fireside friends, and Mr. Formality will be likely to have his eyes open very wide more than once, if he remains long a listener. But though it certainly can never be charg-

ed upon Dana that he has studied to conceal his opinions, or shrunk from setting them forth in strong lights, yet it is not matter of opinion or of controversy, by any means, that forms the staple of his discourse. He loves rather to dwell upon matters of art and manners, on subjects connected with painting and music, and poetry, the soul of all. Here his fountain of ideas is inexhaustible; and he pours them out so constantly and unerringly towards all that is high and good, that they germinate and grow upward into lofty and true principles in the minds of others. Within this circle, and it is a sufficiently extensive one, few can walk so well as he.

He has also the rare faculty of imperceptibly conducting conversation along these quiet and secure channels. In passing a few hours with Dana, and those by whom he is usually surrounded, men lose for the while a portion of their individuality, and find themselves capable of new states of being. They find themselves refreshed, or perplexed, or excited, they hardly know why or how, but impressed they must be if they possess common susceptibility. There are those who have this secretly influencing faculty in common with Dana — many, it is probable, in all walks of life — individuals who have power to throw a passing light on those around them, to lift them up, as it were, by a strong idiosyncratic or idiodynamic force, deprived of which, they fall back by their own inertness; but few are so highly charged with this spiritual magnetism as Dana. His friends must have remarked that there are many in his circle of personal acquaintance who are different creatures when he is by, much wiser and wittier than at any other times, and more

impressible. This is, perhaps, one of the most desirable species of conversational *power*. It is not the power of eloquence and intellectual greatness alone, like that of Coleridge; it is rather the Scott faculty, who charmed listeners by his unaffectedness, and health-imparting vigor. It is the free intercourse of one spirit with another — "good talk," as a child of my acquaintance once expressed it.

But while we are enjoying this sort of intercourse two or three hours have slipped away, and the different members of the poet's family, and the guests, if there are any, and there are almost sure to be some, are beginning to drop in from their morning rambles. One comes with a book in hand from the shades of the hill; another with a portfolio; two or three more with baskets of blackberries, for the hill and its environs are said to be one of the best "berrying places" in the vicinity, as the anything-but-ruby lips of all the incomers bear oral though inarticulate evidence. While all this transpires dinner approaches, and it becomes time, as Dana the younger might express it, to "call all hands;" for some are still away yonder, looking like Matthew Lee —

> "Sitting on that long, black ledge,
> Which makes so far out in the sea;
> Feeling the kelp-weed on its edge" —

and some are still ensanguining their fingers in the blackberry thickets, lost to all considerations of time and dining. The call must be sounded, which is a horn, blown by a Triton — not a "wreathèd horn," however, but a *tin* one, such as sends welcome echoes in summer time all over New England meadows. They hear; and rock, wood, and hill

"rebellow to the roar." Very soon the truants are brought in, and after the usual metamorposis in apparel, the important duty of the day commences. Think of thus dining, in a parlor with the cool southwest wind blowing through the lattice right off the Atlantic, drowsily murmuring on the beach below!

Were it not, gentle reader, who thus far hast accompanied me — were it not that you are invisible to mortal eyes, I should insist on your taking a place at the table, where, I feel sure, if you love what refreshes every department, floor, or story of the inner man, you would enjoy yourself and be welcome; but this is denied me. On the parlor table there, you will find some newspapers, magazines and books; divinity, German metaphysics, novels, and the like, mostly in English; and on the piano is a pile of music, much of which has been sung or played till the notes of all the parts have almost vanished into the air — among the rest, some old masses of Haydn and Mozart, which it may amuse you to put together according to the paging. (I have myself tried it with but indifferent success.) Or if Griswold's "Poets of America" is among the books, perhaps it would suit you better to glance at his sketch of Dana's life and writings. Lest it should not be, I will leave you the following summary: —

"Richard Henry Dana was born at Cambridge in 1787. At the age of ten he went to live with his grandfather, the Hon. William Ellery, of Newport, R. I., one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Here he remained until he entered Harvard College. On leaving College in 1807, he went to Baltimore and entered as a law student in

the office of Gen. Robert Goodloe Harper, of Baltimore. Returning thence, he finished his studies and commenced practice in his native town. He soon gave up the law, however, and became an assistant of his relative, Prof. Edward T. Channing, in the conduct of the North American Review, then established about two years. In 1821 he began the "Idle Man," in which he published some of his most admired tales. His first poem, "The Dying Raven," he published in 1825, in the New-York Review, then edited by Mr. Bryant. Two years after he published the "Buccaneer, and other Poems," and in 1833 his "Poems and Prose Writings." His Lectures on Shakspeare, which have been delivered in most of our principal cities, he has not yet given to the public. In 1849 he published a new edition of his entire collected works. He has always resided in Boston or its vicinity, and the incidents of his life are purely domestic."

Such is a brief summary of the life of one whose writings have exercised a great and permanent and healthful influence upon our literature, and whose position is in the first rank of the intellectual men of our nation.

Many such summaries might be read during a dinner-time — even during an American dinner-time — but, as the chorus to Henry Vth very sensibly remarks, "time, numbers, and due course of things, cannot be here presented." I shall, therefore, call up ancient Gower to assure the reader, should he doubt it, that dinner is now over. Having already transported him four miles (and I may wish him to walk home with me presently) I do not feel at liberty to draw further upon his credulity without a letter of credit from an approved house. Doctor Johnson observes of Othello, that

"had the scene opened in Cyprus, and the preceding incidents been occasionally related, there had been little wanting to a drama of the most exact and scrupulous regularity." Judging from the success of much of the fictitious and dramatic literature of the day, I fear he had too little confidence in the docility of the human fancy; I would not hesitate, did I know any thing of the matter, to introduce into this sketch an essay on the Tariff question. The public are getting to be like the gentleman who, on doubting the truth of a story, and being taken up for it, pacified the narrator by begging his pardon, and saying that he would believe any thing, "rather than hurt a friend's feelings."

But this is mere after-dinner criticism. We are now in mid-afternoon, seated with the poet's family and guests, in the shade of the house; some of the ladies are in the parlor or under the piazza playing at needlework; but the most of us have brought chairs upon the narrow lawn above the cliff, and are idle according to our several tastes. The children — Mr. Dana's grandchildren and the children of a visitor — are occupied with a nest of young sea-gulls which the boys brought yesterday from yonder bare rock about two miles off shore, and which they are trying to tame. Some are endeavoring to count the number of sails that now glisten over the sea in the light of the declining sun, and there is a question whether there are fifty-two or three in all, it being doubtful whether those just visible specks below the eastern horizon ought to be reckoned; also minor questions have arisen as to their rig, whether they are foreign or domestic, and the like — matters which are the fruit of endless discussion with young sailors not yet emerged from the state of

*boat*hood. Faces loved and revered for many years are around us — others in which we trace the lineaments of those that were young when we were young — more than all, one that was old when we were young, and is, to me at least, less old now that I am older. Speaking of the scene before us, some one half consciously quotes —

> "Or like a ship some summer's day
> In sunshine sailing far away:"—

which leads our venerable host to praise "The White Doe of Rylestone" in language of which the words might be as easily quoted as "How fine!" or "I love thee!" but which, in their expression, bear, as those often do, a meaning that the printer's art cannot reach. From this we are very naturally led to speak of Wordsworth, and the Prelude—but we are interrupted by a shout from the juveniles; "there comes the Cunarder!" And sure enough there she is, her black hull looming on the horizon, and a long line of smoke following in her wake. The telescope is brought out, mounted on a chair, and adjusted and re-adjusted to suit the visions of all. Through it we can see the white foam from the steamship's wheels, and the "bone in her mouth;" we can almost distinguish people on her deck. In a few hours more she will be in her dock, and to-morrow afternoon some of her passengers may be in New York, some in Albany, and some in the White Mountains. The news she brings will be in New Orleans before morning. Wonder who is on board? Perhaps the Queen herself. She would be welcomed, I am sure, as never was lady before. What processions we should have? Up the Bowery, down Broadway;

from Roxbury line to Faneuil Hall, up Court and Tremont to a tent on the Common, &c.,—it would be grand! But she will probably come in her own yacht—and when she does, nobody certainly can say we have a British *tory* among us.

"But do you think," observes our host, very characteristically, "that all we gain in mere utility must necessarily be obtained at some sacrifice of beauty? What can be more beautiful to the eye than those white sails—their varying forms and shades of lightness? The steamship certainly cannot compare with them. And so with stage coaches and railroads, and in architecture—indeed every where, we observe it." The suggestion leads to some discussion, which is interrupted, however, from another quarter by a question about the opera. This, by some occult, though natural transition, leads us to speak of the Coal Mines of Rhode Island; Tennyson; Ruskin and Turner; Homœopathy; New-York book-publishers; a receipt for making bread without yeast; whether it would be believed (this in answer to a young academician guest, who objected to a story he had been reading, its want of probability) that Mr. Dana and myself had listened to quartetts of Mozart and Beethoven in such a street in New York on a certain winter evening, while a wild elephant was walking under the very window? arguing that the very improbability ought to command belief; then as to the overland route to California; Margaret Fuller; Bloomerism; the Senate of the United States; that there ought to be a new edition of Brockden Brown, with personal recollections of him from a lady (the mother of one now present) who remembers him; when will there be another Charles Lamb? the poet agrees with Sir Kenelm

Digby about Cervantes and Don Quixote, which I by no means can; Hartley Coleridge, and Ejuxrias: —

Boswell.—"Do you suppose great artists *feel*, like other men?"

Dana.—"Yes; they are strong enough to bear at all."

Boswell.—"And that Shakspeare felt Hamlet, even?"

Dana.—"Certainly."

Boswell.—"I can believe it of Mozart, when I hear that Kyrie to the Twelfth Mass. But *I* was never meant for an artist, then. I am not strong; I cannot 'suffer and be strong.'"

Dana.—(Smiling) "You are big enough. Well, there's nothing like keeping at work and doing the best we can. You see it is easy to give advice, at all events."

Presently this very formal sort of conversation is interrupted by a discovery some one has made, that there is an interloper with a gun upon the beach. Poet, knights, and ladies instantly act upon the advice of King Henry at Agincourt; and there is no rest till the Exile of Erin is sent to request and then warn the intruder to depart.

But the incident breaks the current of chat, and looking westward, we perceive it is near sundown. We must depart also, and I shall be glad of your company at least a part of my way home. Leave taking between those who expect soon to meet again is a short ceremony; we merely bid good evening, reserving for another occasion the sight of some favorite trees in the woods, and some recently discovered paths. We are soon out upon the old road by the gate we came. How cool and grateful the forest smells in the falling dew! Yet it and all things do but sadden me; and were it

not for such friends as we have seen to day, the shadows would deepen over my soul, as they do even now, while we emerge from the wood, over the valley. But see how gloriously the sunset touches the hill! What a mist of gold and purple! And away yonder, directly in the eye of the sunset, is the window of my chamber, all on fire. But the ocean is cold, and those far eastern sails that were so bright, look like spectres wandering on the verge of nothingness. As night comes on they would come to land, only that the watchful moon is already preparing to set her mild eye upon them while we sleep.

Here we have reached a by-path which will conduct me by a shorter way across the pastures and beaches to my home. And here, Reader, with many thanks for your courtesy, and hoping you have not been wearied, I will bid you farewell. May we meet again!

Vices are about us, not to lure us away or make us morose, but to remind us of our frailty, & to keep down our pride. We are put into a right relation with the world; neither holding it in proud scorn, like the solitary man, nor being carried along by shifting & hurried feelings, & vague & careless notions of things, like the world's man. We do not take novelty for improvement, or set up vogue for a rule of conduct. Neither do we despair, as if all great virtues had departed with the years gone by, though we see new vices, frailties, & follies taking growth in the very light which is spreading over the earth.

R. H Dana: From "Domestic Life."

William H. Prescott.



PRESCOTT.

THE true idea of a home includes something more than a place to live in. It involves elements which are intangible and imponderable. It means a particular spot in which the mind is developed, the character trained, and the affections fed. It supposes a chain of association, by which mute material forms are linked to certain states of thought and moods of feeling, so that our joys and sorrows, our struggles and triumphs, are chronicled on the walls of a house, the trunk of a tree, or the alleys of a garden. Many

persons are so unhappy as to pass through life without these sweet influences. Their lives are wandering and nomadic, and their temporary places of shelter are mere tents, though built of brick or wood. The bride is brought home to one house, the child is born in another, and dies in a third. As we walk through the unexpressive squares of one of our cities, and mark their dreary monotony of front, and their ever-changing door-plates, how few of these houses are there that present themselves to the eye with any of the symbols and indications of home. These, we say instinctively, are mere parallelograms of air, with sections and divisions at regular intervals, in which men may eat and sleep, but not live, in the large meaning of the term. But a country-house, however small and plain, if it be only well placed, as in the shadow of a patriarchal tree, or on the banks of a stream, or in the hollow of a sheltering hill, has more of the look of home than many a costly city mansion. In the former, a portion of nature seems to have been subdued and converted to the uses of man, and yet its primitive character to have remained unchanged; but, in the latter, nature has been slain and buried, and a huge brick monument erected to her memory. We read that "God setteth the solitary in families." The significance of this beautiful expression dwells in its last word. The solitary are not set in hotels or boarding-houses, nor yet in communities or phalansteries, but in families. The burden of solitude is to be lightened by household affections, and not by mere aggregation. True society — that which the heart craves and the character needs — is only to be found at home, and what are called the cares of housekeeping, from which so many selfishly

and indolently shrink, when lightened by mutual forbearance and unpretending self-sacrifice, become occasions of endearment and instruments of moral and spiritual growth.

The partial deprivation of sight under which Mr. Prescott has long labored, is now a fact in literary history almost as well known as the blindness of Milton or the lameness of Scott. Indeed, many magnify in their thoughts the extent of his loss, and picture to themselves the author of "Ferdinand and Isabella" as a venerable personage, entirely sightless, whose "dark steps" require a constant "guiding hand," and are greatly surprised when they see this ideal image transformed into a figure retaining a more than common share of youthful lightness of movement, and a countenance full of freshness and animation, which betrays to a casual observation no mark of visual imperfection. The weight of this trial, heavy indeed to a man of literary tastes, has been balanced in Mr. Prescott's case by great compensations. He has been happy in the home into which he was born, happy in the home he has made for himself, and happy in the troops of loving and sympathizing friends whom he has gathered around him. He has been happy in the early possession of that leisure which has enabled him to give his whole energies to literary labors, without distraction or interruption, and, most of all, happy in his own genial temper; his cheerful spirit, his cordial frankness, and that disposition to look on the bright side of men and things, which is better not only than house and land, but than genius and fame. It is his privilege, by no means universal with successful authors, to be best valued where most known; and the graceful tribute which his intimate

friend, Mr. Ticknor, has paid to him, in the preface to his History of Spanish Literature, that his "honors will always be dearest to those who have best known the discouragements under which they have been won, and the modesty and gentleness with which they are worn," is but an expression of the common feeling of all those who know him.

To come down to smaller matters, Mr. Prescott has been fortunate in the merely local influences which have helped to train his mind and character. His lines have fallen to him in pleasant places. His father, who removed from Salem to Boston when he himself was quite young, lived for many years in a house in Bedford-street, now swept away by the march of change, the effect of which, in a place of limited extent like Boston, is to crowd the population into constantly narrowing spaces. It was one of a class of houses of which but few specimens are now left in our densely-settled peninsula. It was built of brick, painted yellow, was square in form, and had rooms on either side of the front door. It had little architectural merit and no architectural pretension. But it stood by itself and was not imprisoned in a block, had a few feet of land between the front door and the street, and a reasonable amount of breathing-space and elbow-room at the sides and in the rear, and was shaded by some fine elms and horse-chestnuts. It had a certain individual character and expression of its own. Here Mr. Prescott the elder, commonly known and addressed in Boston as Judge Prescott, lived from 1817 to 1844, the year of his death. Mr. Prescott the younger, the historian, upon his marriage, did not leave his father's house to seek a new home, but, complying with a kindly

custom more common in Europe, at least upon the Continent, than in America, continued to reside under the paternal roof, the two families forming one united and affectionate household, which, in the latter years of Judge Prescott's life, presented most engaging forms of age, mature life, and blooming youth. As Mr. Prescott's circle of research grew more and more wide, the house was enlarged by the addition of a study, to accommodate his books and manuscripts, and here fame found him living when she came to seek him after the publication of the "History of Ferdinand and Isabella." No one of those who were so fortunate as to enjoy the friendship of both the father and the son ever walks by the spot where this house once stood, without recalling, with a mingling of pleasure and of pain, its substantial and respectable appearance, its warm atmosphere of welcome and hospitality, and the dignified form, so expressive of wisdom and of worth, of that admirable person who so long presided over it. This house was pulled down a few years since, soon after the death of Judge Prescott: his son having previously removed to the house in Beacon-street, in which he now lives during the winter months.

Few authors have ever been so rich in dwelling-places as Mr. Prescott. "The truth is," says he in a letter to the publisher, "I have three places of residence, among which I contrive to distribute my year. Six months I pass in town, where my house is in Beacon-street, looking on the common, which, as you may recollect, is an uncommonly fine situation, commanding a noble view of land and water."

There is little in the external aspect of this house in Beacon-street to distinguish it from others in its immediate

vicinity. It is one of a continuous but not uniform block. It is of brick, painted white, four stories high, and with one of those swelled fronts which are characteristic of Boston. It has the usual proportion and distribution of drawing-rooms, dining-room and chambers, which are furnished with unpretending elegance and adorned with some por-



traits, copies of originals in Spain, illustrative of Mr. Prescott's writings. The most striking portion of the interior consists of an ample library, added by Mr. Prescott to the rear of the house, and communicating with the drawing-rooms. It is an apartment of noble size and fine proportions, filled with a choice collection of books, mostly historical, which are disposed in cases of richly-veined and highly-

polished oak. This room, which is much used in the social arrangements of the household, is not that in which Mr. Prescott does his hard literary work. A much smaller apartment, above the library and communicating with it, is the working study — an arrangement similar to that adopted by Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford.

Mr. Prescott's collection of books has been made with special reference to his own departments of inquiry, and in these it is very rich. It contains many works which cannot be found in any other private library, at least, in the country. Besides these, he has a large number of manuscripts, amounting in the aggregate to not less than twenty thousand folio pages, illustrative of the periods of history treated in his works. These manuscripts have been drawn from all parts of Europe, as well as from the States of Spanish origin in this country. He has also many curious and valuable autographs of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Nor is the interest of this apartment confined to its books and manuscripts. Over the window at the northern end, there are two swords suspended, and crossed like a pair of clasped hands. One of these was borne by Col. Prescott at Bunker Hill, and the other by Capt. Lizeen, the maternal grandfather of Mrs. Prescott, who commanded the British sloop of war Falcon, which was engaged in firing upon the American troops on that occasion. It is a significant and suggestive sight, from which a thoughtful mind may draw out a long web of reflection. These swords, once waving in hostile hands, but now amicably lying side by side, symbolize not merely the union of families once op-

posed in deadly struggle, but, as we hope and trust, the mood of peace which is destined to guide the two great nations which, like parted streams, trace back their source to the same parent fountain.

On entering the library from the drawing-room, the visitor sees at first no egress except by the door through which he had just passed; but, on his attention being called to a particular space in the populous shelves, he is, if a reading man, attracted by some rows of portly quartos and goodly octavos, handsomely bound, bearing inviting names, unknown to Lowndes or Brunet. On reaching forth his hand to take one of them down, he finds that while they keep the word of promise to the eye, they break it to the hope, for the seeming books are nothing but strips of gilded leather pasted upon a flat surface, and stamped with titles, in the selection of which, Mr. Prescott has indulged that playful fancy which, though it can rarely appear in his grave historical works, is constantly animating his correspondence and conversation. It is, in short, a secret door, opening at the touch of a spring, and concealed from observation when shut. A small winding staircase leads to a room of moderate extent above, so arranged as to give all possible advantage of light to the imperfect eyes of the historian. Here Mr. Prescott gathers around him the books and manuscripts in use for the particular work on which he may be engaged, and few persons, except himself and his secretary, ever penetrate to this studious retreat.

In regard to situation, few houses in any city are superior to this. It stands directly upon the common, a beautiful piece of ground, tastefully laid out, moulded into an

exhilarating variety of surface, and only open to the objection of being too much cut up by the intersecting paths which the time-saving habits of the thrifty Bostonians have traced across it. Mr. Prescott's house stands nearly opposite a small sheet of water, to which the tasteless name of Frog Pond is so inveterately fixed by long usage, that it can never be divorced from it. Of late years, since the introduction of the Cochituate water, a fountain has been made to play here, which throws up an obelisk of sparkling silver, springing from the bosom of the little lake, like a palm-tree from the sands, producing, in its simple beauty, a far finer effect than the costly architectural fancies of Europe, in which the water spurts and fizzles amid a tasteless crowd of sprawling Tritons and flopping dolphins. Here a beautiful spectacle may be seen in the long afternoons of June, before the midsummer heats have browned the grass, when the crystal plumes of the fountain are waving in the breeze, and the rich, yellow light of the slow-sinking sun hangs in the air and throws long shadows on the turf, and the Common is sprinkled, far and wide, with well-dressed and well-mannered crowds — a spectacle in which not only the eye but the heart also may take pleasure, from the evidence which it furnishes of the general diffusion of material comfort, worth and intelligence.

The situation of the house admirably adapts it also for a winter residence. The sun, during nearly his whole course, plays on the walls of the houses which occupy the western part of Beacon-street, and the broad pavement in front is, in the coldest weather, clear of ice and snow, and offers an inviting promenade even to the long dresses and thin shoes

which so many of our perverse wives and daughters will persist in bringing into the streets. Here, in the early days of spring, the timid crocus and snowdrop peep from the soil long before the iron hand of winter has been lifted from the rest of the city. Besides the near attraction of the Common, which is beautiful in all seasons, this part of Boston, from its elevated position, commands a fine view of the western horizon, including a range of graceful and thickly-peopled hills in Brookline and Roxbury. Our brilliant winter sunsets are seen here to the greatest advantage. The whole western sky burns with rich metallic lights of orange, yellow, and yellow-green; the outlines of the hills in the clear, frosty air, are sharply cut against this glowing back-ground; the wind-harps of the leafless trees send forth a melancholy music, and the faint stars steal out one by one as the shrouding veil of daylight is slowly withdrawn. A walk at this hour along the western side of the Common offers a larger amount of the soothing and elevating influences of nature than most dwellers in cities can command.*

In this house in Beacon-street, Mr. Prescott lives for

* The beauty of our winter sunsets is, so far as I am aware, peculiar to our country. It depends upon a combination of elements found nowhere else; a low temperature with a brilliant sunlight and a transparent atmosphere: the climate of Sweden with the sky of Italy. In northern Europe, the tone of coloring is too gray and subdued, and the short days of winter leave but little light in the air. In Italy, the beauty of the winter sunsets is essentially the same as that of the summer. In both, the coloring is what painters would call warm. But there is something peculiarly spiritual in the pure light of one of our winter sunsets, in which the frost keeps down all the clouds and vapors of earth, and the western sky looks like a vault of crystal, through which the glory of some other world is shining.

about half the year, engaged in literary research, and finding relief from his studies in the society of a numerous circle of friends, a precious possession, in which no man is more rich. Few persons in our country are so exclusively men of letters. His time and energies are not at all given to the exciting and ephemeral claims of the passing hour, but devoted to those calm researches the results of which have appeared in his published works. He is strongly social in his tastes and habits, and his manners and conversation in society are uncommonly free from that stiffness and coldness which are apt to creep over students, and retain more of youthful ease and unreserve than most men, whatever be their way of life, carry into middle age. He is methodical in his habits of exercise as well as of study, and is much given to long walks, as in former years to long rides. These periods of exercise, however, are not wholly idle. From his defective sight he has acquired the habit (not a very common one) of thinking without the pen, and many a smooth period has been wrought and polished in the forge of the brain while in the saddle or on foot.*

The occupants of most of the houses in that part of Boston where Mr. Prescott lives, are birds of passage. As soon as the sun of our short-lived summer puts off the countenance of a friend, and puts on that of a foe, one by one

* Mr. Prescott inherits from his father a taste for riding and walking alone. For many years, during the life of the latter, they were both in the habit of riding before breakfast. Their horses would be brought to the door at the same time, and they would start together, but one would take the right hand and one the left. This peculiarity, so little in unison with his otherwise social tastes, is often the subject of playful banter among his friends.

they take their flight. House after house shuts up its green lids, and resigns itself to a three or four months' sleep. The owners distribute themselves among various places of retreat, rural, suburban or marine, more or less remote. Mr. Prescott also quits the noise, dust and heat of Boston at this season, and takes refuge for some weeks in a cottage at Nahant. "This place," he writes to the publisher, "is a cottage — what Lady Emeline Stuart Wortley calls in her 'Travels' 'a charming country villa' at Nahant, where for more than twenty years I have passed the summer months, as it is the coolest spot in New England. The house stands on a bald cliff, overlooking the ocean, so near that in a storm the spray is thrown over the piazza, and as it stands on the extreme point of the peninsula, is many miles out at sea. There is more than one printed account of Nahant, which is a remarkable watering-place, from the bold formation of the coast and its exposure to the ocean. It is not a bad place — this sea-girt citadel — for reverie and writing, with the music of the winds and waters incessantly beating on the rocks and broad beaches below. This place is called 'Fitful Head,' and Norna's was not wilder."

The peninsula of Nahant, which Mr. Prescott has thus briefly described, is a rocky promontory running out to sea from the mainland of Lynn, to which it is connected by a straight beach, some two or three miles in length, divided into two unequal portions by a bold headland called Little Nahant. It juts out abruptly, in an adventurous and defying way, and, laid down on a map of a large scale, it looks like an outstretched arm with a clenched fist at the end of it. Thus going out to sea to battle with the waves on our

stormy New-England coast, it is built of the strongest materials which the laboratory of Nature can furnish. It is a solid mass of the hardest porphyritic rock, over which a thin drapery of soil is thrown. At the southern extremity this wall of rock is broken into grand, irregular forms, and seamed and scarred with the marks of innumerable conflicts. A lover of Nature in her sterner moods can find few spots of more attraction than this presents after a south-easterly storm. The dark ridges of the rapid waves leap upon the broken cliffs with an expression so like that of animal rage, that it is difficult to believe that they are not conscious of what they are about. But in an instant the gray mass is broken into splinters of snowy spray, which glide and hiss over the rocky points and hang their dripping and fleecy locks along the sheer wall, the dazzling white contrasting as vividly with the reddish brown of the rock, as does the passionate movement with the monumental calm. One is never weary of watching so glorious a spectacle, for though the elements remain the same, yet, from their combination, there results a constant variety of form and movement. Nature never repeats herself. As no two pebbles on a beach are identical, so no two waves ever break upon a rock in precisely the same way.

The beach which connects the headland of Little Nahant with the mainland of Lynn, is about a mile and a half long, and curved into the finest line of beauty. At low tide there is a space of some twenty or thirty rods wide, left bare by the receding waters. This has a very gentle inclination, and having been hammered upon so long by the action of the waves, it is as hard and smooth as a marble floor, presenting

an inviting field for exercise, whether on foot, in carriages, or on horseback. The wheels roll over it in silence and leave no indentation behind, and even the hoofs of a galloping steed make but a momentary impression. On a fine breezy afternoon, in the season, when the tide is favorable, this beach presents a most exhilarating spectacle, for the whole gay world of the place is attracted here; some in carriages, some on horseback, and some on foot. Every kind of carriage that American ingenuity has ever devised is here represented, from the old-fashioned family coach, with its air of solid, church-and-state respectability, to the sporting-man's wagon, which looks like a vehicular tarantula, all wheels and no body. The inspiriting influence of the scene extends itself to both bipeds and quadrupeds. Little boys and girls race about on the fascinating wet sand, so that their nurses, what with the waves and what with the horses' hoofs, are kept in a perpetual frenzy of apprehension. Sober pedestrians, taking their "constitutional," involuntarily quicken their pace, as if they were really walking for pleasure and not for exercise. The well-fed family horse pricks up his ears and lifts his feet lightly, as if he felt a sense of pleasure in the coolness and moisture under them. Fair equestrians dash across the beach at full gallop, their veils and dresses streaming on the breeze, attended by their own flying shadows in the smooth watery mirror of the yellow sands. Let the waves curl and break in long lines of dazzling foam and spring upon the beach as if they enjoyed their own restless play; sprinkle the bay with snowy sails for the setting sun to linger and play upon, and cover the whole with a bright blue sky dappled with

drifting clouds, and all these elements make up so animating a scene, that a man must be very moody or very apathetic not to feel his heart grow lighter as he gazes upon it.

The position of Nahant, and its convenient distance from Boston, make it a place of much resort in the hot months of summer. There are many hotels and boarding-houses; and also a large number of cottages, occupied for the most part by families, the heads of which come up to town every day and return in the evening. The climate and scenery are so marked, that they give rise to very decided opinions. Many pronounce Nahant delightful, but some do not hesitate to call it detestable. No place can be more marine and less rural. There are no woods and very few trees. There are none but ocean sights and ocean sounds. It is like being out at sea in a great ship that does not rock. As every wind blows off the bay, the temperature of the air is very low, and the clear green water looks cold enough in a hot August noon to make one's teeth chatter, so that it requires some resolution to venture upon a bath, and still more to repeat the experiment. The characteristic climate of Nahant may be observed in one of those days, not uncommon on the coast of New England, when a sharp east wind sets in after a hot morning. The sea turns up a chill steel-blue surface, and the air is so cold that it is not comfortable to sit still in the shade, while the sky, the parched grass, the dusty roads, and the sunshine bright and cold, like moonbeams, give to the eye a strangely deceptive promise of heat. Under the calm light of a broad full moon, Nahant puts on a strange and unearthly beauty. The sea sparkles in silver gleams, and its phosphoric foam is in vivid con-

trast with the inky shadows of the cliffs. The ships dart away into the luminous distance, like spectral forms. In the deep stillness, the sullen plunge of the long, breaking waves becomes oppressive to the spirits. The roofs of the cottages glitter with spiritual light, and the white line of the dusty road is turned into a path of pearl.

The cottage which Mr. Prescott occupies at Nahant is built of wood, two stories in height, and has a spacious piazza running round it, which in fine weather is much used as a supplementary drawing-room. There is nothing remarkable whatever in its external appearance. Its plain and unassuming aspect provokes neither criticism nor admiration. Its situation is one of the finest in the whole peninsula. It stands upon the extremity of a bold, bluff-like promontory, and its elevated position gives it the command of a very wide horizon. The sea makes up a large proportion of the prospect, and as every vessel that sails into or out of the harbor of Boston passes within range of the eye, there is never a moment in which the view is not animated by ships and canvas. The pier, where the steamer which plies between Boston and Nahant, lands and receives her passengers, and the Swallow's Cave, one of the lions of the place, are both within a stone's throw of the cottage.

Mr. Prescott resides at Nahant from eight to ten weeks, and finds a refreshing and restorative influence in its keenly bracing sea-air. This, though a season of retirement, is by no means one of indolence, for he works as many hours every day and accomplishes as much, here, as in Boston, his time of study being comparatively free from those interruptions which in a busy city will so often break into a scholar's

seclusion. As his life at Nahant falls within the travelling season, he receives here many of the strangers who are attracted to his presence by his literary reputation and the report of his amiable manners; and this tribute to celebrity, exacted in the form of golden hours from him as from every distinguished man in our enterprising and inquisitive age, is paid with a cheerful good-humor, which leaves no alloy in the recollections of those who have thus enjoyed the privilege of his society.

Mr. Prescott's second remove — for if Poor Richard's saying be strictly true he is burnt out every year — is from Nahant to Pepperell, and usually happens early in September. His home in Pepperell is thus described by him in a letter to the publisher.

"The place at Pepperell has been in the family for more than a century and a half, an uncommon event among our locomotive people. The house is about a century old, the original building having been greatly enlarged by my father first, and since by me. It is here that my grandfather, Col. Wm. Prescott, who commanded at Bunker Hill, was born and died, and in the village church-yard he lies buried under a simple slab, containing only the record of his name and age. My father, Wm. Prescott, the best and wisest of his name, was also born and passed his earlier days here, and, from my own infancy, not a year has passed that I have not spent more or less of in these shades, now hallowed to me by the recollection of happy hours and friends that are gone.

"The place, which is called 'The Highlands,' consists of some two hundred and fifty acres, about forty-two miles from

Boston, on the border-line of Massachusetts and New Hampshire. It is a fine rolling country; and the house stands on a rising ground that descends with a gentle sweep to the Nissitisset, a clear and very pretty river, affording picturesque views in its winding course. A bold mountain chain on the northwest, among which is the Grand Monadnoc, in New Hampshire, makes a dark frame to the picture. The land is well studded with trees — oak, walnut, chestnut, and maple — distributed in clumps and avenues, so as to produce an excellent effect. The maple, in particular, in its autumn season, when the family are there, makes a brave show with its gay livery when touched by the frost."

To possess an estate like that at Pepperell, which has come down by lineal descent through several successions of owners, all of whom were useful and honorable men in their day and generation, is a privilege not common any where, and very rare in a country like ours, young in years and not fruitful in local attachments. Family pride may be a weakness, but family reverence is a just and generous sentiment. No man can look round upon fields of his own like those at Pepperell, where, to a suggestive eye, the very forms of the landscape seem to have caught an expression from the patriotism, the public spirit, the integrity, and the intelligence which now for more than a hundred years have been associated with them, without being conscious of a rush of emotions, all of which set in the direction of honor and virtue.

The name of Prescott has now, for more than two hundred years, been known and honored in Massachusetts. The first of the name, of whom mention is made, was

John Prescott, who came to this country in 1640, and settled in Lancaster. He was a blacksmith and millwright by trade — a man of athletic frame and dauntless resolution; and his strength and courage were more than once put to the proof in those encounters which so often took place between the Indians and the early settlers of New England. He brought with him from England a helmet and suit of armor — perhaps an heir-loom descended from some ancestor who had fought at Poitiers or Flodden-field — and whenever the Indians attacked his house he clothed himself in full mail and sallied out against them; and the advantages he is reported to have gained were probably quite as much owing to the terror inspired by his appearance as to the prowess of his arm.

His grandson, Benjamin Prescott, who lived in Groton, was a man of influence and consideration in the colony of Massachusetts. He represented Groton for many years in the colonial legislature, was a magistrate, and an officer in the militia. In 1735 he was chosen agent of the province to maintain their rights in a controversy with New Hampshire respecting boundary lines, but declined the trust on account of not having had the small-pox, which was prevalent at the time in London. Mr. Edmund Quincy, who was appointed in his place, took the disease and died of it. But, in the same year, the messenger of fate found Mr. Prescott upon his own farm, engaged in the peaceful labors of agriculture. He died in August, 1735, of a sudden inflammatory attack, brought on by over-exertion, in a hot day, to save a crop of grain from an impending shower. He was but forty years old at the time of his death, and the influ-

ence he had long enjoyed among a community slow to give their confidence to the young, is an expressive tribute to his character and understanding. He had the further advantage of a dignified and commanding personal appearance. In 1735, the year of his death, he received a donation of about eight hundred acres of land from the town of Groton for his services in procuring a large territory for them from the General Court, and the present family estate in Pepperell forms probably a part of this grant.

His second son was Col. Wm. Prescott, the commander of the American forces at the Battle of Bunker Hill, who, after his father's death, and while he was yet in his minority, settled upon the estate in Pepperell, and built the house which is still standing. Up to the age of forty-nine, his life, with the exception of a few months' service in the old French war, was passed in agricultural labors, and the discharge of those modest civic trusts which the influence of his family, and the confidence inspired by his own character, devolved upon him. Joining the army at Cambridge immediately after the news of the Concord fight, it was his good fortune to secure a permanent place in history, by commanding the troops of his country in a battle, to which subsequent events gave a significance greatly disproprotioned both to the numbers engaged in it and to its immediate results. At the end of the campaign of 1776, he returned home and resumed his usual course of life, which continued uninterrupted, except that he was present as a volunteer with Gen. Gates at the surrender of Burgoyne, until his death, in 1795, when he was in his seventieth year. He was a man of vigorous mind, not much indebted to the advantages of education

in early life, though he preserved to the last a taste for reading. His judgment and good sense were much esteemed by the community in which he lived, and were always at their service both in public and private affairs. He was of a generous temper, and somewhat impaired his estate by his liberal spirit and hearty hospitality. In the career of Col. Prescott we see how well the training given by the institutions of New England fits a man for discharging worthily the duties of war or peace. We see a man summoned from the plough, and by the accident of war called upon to perform an important military service, and in the exercise of his duty we find him displaying that calm courage and sagacious judgment which a life in the camp is supposed to be necessary to bestow. Nor was his a rare case, for as the needs of our revolutionary struggle required such men, they were always forthcoming. Nor is there any reason to suppose that Col. Prescott himself ever looked upon his conduct on the seventeenth of June as any thing to be specially commended, but only as the performance of a simple piece of duty, which could not have been put by without shame and disgrace.*

* The revolutionary annals of New England abound in curious and characteristic anecdotes, illustrating the resolute spirit of the people, most of which are preserved only in those town histories which contain the results of minute investigation, applied to a limited territory, and guided by a spirit of local pride and affection. The news of the march of the British troops out of Boston on the morning of April 19, 1775, which flew like a fiery cross through New England, reached Pepperell at about ten o'clock in the forenoon. Col. Prescott immediately summoned his company, and put himself at their head and proceeded towards Concord, having been joined by a reinforcement from Groton. A member of the company — Abel Parker — was ploughing in a distant field,

Judge Prescott, who died in Boston in the month of December, 1844, at the age of eighty-two, was the only child of Col. Prescott, and born upon the family estate at Pepperell. His son, in one of his previously quoted letters, speaks of him as "the best and wisest of his name." It does not become a stranger to their blood to confirm or deny a comparative estimate like this, but all who knew Judge Prescott will agree that he must have gone very far who would have found a wiser or a better man. His active life was mainly passed in the unambitious labors of the bar; a profession which often secures to its members a fair share of substantial returns and much local influence, but rarely gives extended or posthumous fame. He had no taste for political life, and the few public trusts which he discharged were

and did not receive the alarm in season to start with his fellow-soldiers; but as soon as he heard it, he left his oxen in the field unyoked, ran home, seized his gun in one hand and his best coat in the other, and set out upon a run to join his companions, whom he overtook in Groton. After the departure of the Pepperell and Groton troops, these towns were left nearly defenceless, but in a state of great uneasiness from a rumored approach of the British regulars. In this emergency, several of the women of the neighborhood met together, dressed themselves in the clothes of their absent husbands and brothers, armed themselves with muskets, pitchforks, and such weapons as they could find, and having elected Mrs. David Wright of Pepperell their commander, took possession of a bridge between Pepperell and Groton, which they resolved to maintain against foreign force or domestic treason. A person soon appeared on horseback, who was known to be a zealous Tory. He was immediately seized by these resolute heroines, unhorsed and searched, and some treasonable correspondence found in his boots. He was detained prisoner, and his dispatches sent to the Committee of Safety. For these anecdotes, as well as for some of the statements in the text, I am indebted to Butler's History of Groton, an unpretending and meritorious work.

assumed rather from a sense of duty than from inclination. He was never a member of Congress, nor in any way connected with the general government, but was always content to move within the narrower sphere of his own State. As a practising lawyer, no person ever enjoyed in a greater degree the confidence of the community or the respect of the courts, and for many years his only difficulty was how to dispose of the great amount of responsible business intrusted to him, without injury to his health. This rank at the bar he had fairly earned both by a large measure and a happy combination of moral and intellectual qualities — by a good sense and sagacity which instinctively led him to the right, by invincible industry, by large stores of legal learning, by natural dignity of manner and a perfect fairness of mind which never allowed him to overstate the testimony of a witness or the force of an authority. To say that Judge Prescott was a man of sense and sagacity is not enough, for in him these qualities ripened into wisdom. As he was never called upon to manage public affairs upon a large scale, or to draw conclusions from a very wide range of observation, we can only reason from what we know to what we do not know, and infer that in the prime of his faculties he would have proved himself competent to the highest trust which his country could have imposed upon him; but, within his sphere of action and experience, his judgment commanded the greatest respect, was sought in the most difficult questions, and reposed upon with the utmost confidence. For the last thirty years of his life there was no one in Boston whose counsel was more solicited or more valued in important matters, whether public or private. He was not called upon,

like his father, to serve his country in war, but the walks of civic and peaceful life allow a man to show of what stuff he is made, and the friends of Judge Prescott knew that he had the hereditary courage of his race, and that had duty required him to face a bristling line of muskets, he would have done it with as much composure as he ever stood up before a jury to argue in behalf of a client against whom an unjust current of popular prejudice was setting.

The resources of his mind and the well-balanced symmetry of his character, were strikingly seen in his declining years, after his retirement from the bar, which took place in 1828, in consequence of failing health. The interval between active life and the grave is apt to be a trying period with lawyers. It is one of the burdens of our profession that we are obliged to spend half our time in learning what we wish to forget the moment it has served some particular end. The brain is like an inn that is constantly receiving new guests and dismissing the old. Thus the mind of an old lawyer is apt to be like a warehouse, which is in part empty, and in part filled with goods of which the fashion has passed away. But such was not the case with Judge Prescott. His social tastes, his domestic affections, his love of general knowledge, and the interest he had taken in every thing which had interested the community in which he lived, had prevented his mind from becoming warped or narrowed by professional pursuits; and when these were no longer permitted to him, he passed naturally and cheerfully into more tranquil employments. His books, his friends, his family, filled up his hours and gave healthy occupation to his mind. His interest in life was not im-

paired, nor the vigor of his understanding relaxed, by the change.

The writer of this sketch had the privilege of a personal acquaintance with Judge Prescott during the last years of his life. His appearance at that time was dignified and prepossessing. His figure was tall, thin, and slightly bent; his movements active, and his frame untouched by infirmity. His features were regular — in outline and proportion resembling the portraits of a kindred spirit, the late illustrious John Jay — and their expression benevolent and intellectual. His manners were simple, but marked by an air of high breeding, flowing from dignity and refinement of character. He was a perfect gentleman, whether judged by a natural or a conventional standard. A stranger, admitted to his society, would at first have been inclined to describe him by negatives. His manner was not overbearing, his tone was not dogmatical, his voice was not loud. He was free from our bad national habit of making strong assertions and positive statements. He was not a great talker; nor was his conversation brilliant or pointed. But he who had spent any considerable time in Judge Prescott's society, especially if he had had occasion to consult him or ask his advice, would have brought away other than merely negative impressions. He would have recalled the mild and tolerant good sense of his discourse, his penetrating insight, his freedom from prejudice, his knowledge of men so unalloyed by the bitterness, the hardness, the misanthropy with which that knowledge is so often bought, and the natural ease with which the stores of a capacious memory were brought out, as the occasion required. He would

have felt that he had been admitted to the presence of a person of eminent wisdom and worth, whose mind moved in higher regions than wit or eloquence alone can soar to. Who can estimate too highly the privilege of having had such a father — so fitted for the paternal office, that if his son could have had the impossible boon bestowed upon him, of selecting the parent of whom he would have been born, he could never have found a better guide, a wiser counsellor, a truer friend, than he upon whom, in the providence of God, that trust was actually devolved.

The life of Judge Prescott was as happy in its close as it had been during its continuance. On the morning of Sunday, December 8th, 1844, being then in his eighty-third year, he died suddenly and without pain, surrounded by his family and in the perfect possession of all his faculties. His death, though so natural an event at his advanced age, was widely and sincerely mourned, and the expressions of feeling which it called forth, were proportioned to the respect and veneration which had followed him while living.*

The town of Pepperell lies in the northern part of the county of Middlesex, bordering upon the State of New

* The widow of Judge Prescott, the mother of the historian, died in March, 1852, at the age of eighty-four. She was a woman of great benevolence, and large, genial and active sympathies. To the last, in winter's cold or summer's heat, her venerable form was constantly seen in the streets of Boston, as she went about on foot upon her errands of charity. She will be long remembered and sincerely mourned by the widow and the orphan, the poor and the friendless, the neglected and the forsaken. She retained her youthful energy of spirit and freshness of feeling in a remarkable degree to the last moment, and her animated smile and cordial greeting were always full of the sunshine of youth and hope.

Hampshire. Its inhabitants are mostly farmers, cultivating their own lands with their own hands — a class of men which forms the best wealth of a country, the value of whom we never properly estimate till we have been in regions where they have ceased to exist. The soil is of that reasonable and moderate fertility, common in New England, which gives constant motive to intelligent labor, and rewards it with fair returns — a kind of soil very favorable to the growth of the plant, man. The character of the scenery is pleasing, without any claim to be called striking or picturesque. The land rises and falls in a manner that contents the eye, and the distant horizon is dignified by some of those high hills to which, in our magniloquent way, we give the name of mountains. The town has the advantage of being watered by two streams, the Nashua and the Nissitisset. The former is a thrifty New England river that turns mills, furnishes water-power, and works for its living in a respectable way; the latter is a giddy little steam that does little else than look pretty; gliding through quiet meadows fringed with alder and willow, tripping and singing over pebbly shallows, and expanding into tranquil pools, gemmed with white water-lilies, the purest and most spiritual of flowers.

Mr. Prescott's farm is about two miles from the centre of the town, in a region which has more than the average amount of that quiet beauty characteristic of New England scenery. The house stands upon rather high ground, and commands an extensive view of a gently-undulating region, most of which is grass land, which, when clothed in the "glad, light green" of our early summer, and animated with

flying cloud-shadows, presents a fine and exhilarating prospect. As the farm has been so long under cultivation, and as for many years past the claims of taste and the harvests of the eye have not been overlooked in its management, the landscape in the immediate neighborhood of the house has a riper and mellower look than is usual in the rural parts of New England. At a short distance in front, on the opposite side of the road, sloping gently down to the meadows of the Nissitisset, is a smooth symmetrical knoll, on which are some happily-disposed clumps of trees, so that the whole has the air of a scene in an English park. The meadows and fields beyond are also well supplied with trees, and the morning and evening shadows which fall from these, as well as from the rounded heights, give character and expression to the landscape.

The house itself has little to distinguish it from the better class of New England farmhouses. It wears our common uniform of white, with green blinds; is long in proportion to its height, and the older portions bear marks of age. There is a piazza, occupying one side and a part of the front. Since it was first built there have been several additions made to it — some recently, by Mr. Prescott himself — so that the interior is rambling, irregular and old-fashioned, but thoroughly comfortable, and hospitably arranged, so as to accommodate a large number of guests. These are sometimes more numerous than the family itself. There is a small fruit and kitchen garden on the east side of the house, and on the west, as also in front, is a grassy lawn, over which many young feet have sported and frolicked, and some that were not young.

The great charm of the house consists in the number of fine trees by which it is surrounded and overshadowed. These are chiefly elms, oaks, maples and butternuts. Of these last there are some remarkably large specimens. From these trees the house derives an air of dignity and grace which is the more conspicuous from the fact that these noble ornaments to a habitation are not so common in New England as is to be desired. Our agricultural population have not yet shaken off those transmitted impressions derived from a period when a tree was regarded as an enemy to be overcome. Would that the farmers of fifty years ago had been mindful of the injunction given by the dying Scotch laird to his son, "Be aye sticking in a tree, Jock; it will be growing while you are sleeping." What a different aspect the face of the country might have been made to wear. A bald and staring farmhouse, shivering in the winter wind or fainting in the summer sun, without a rag of a tree to cover its nakedness with, is a forlorn and unsightly object, rather a blot upon the landscape than an embellishment to it.

Behind the house, which faces the south, the ground rises into a considerable elevation, upon which there are also several fine trees. A small oval pond is nearly surrounded by a company of graceful elms, which, with their slender branches and pensile foliage, suggest to a fanciful eye a group of wood-nymphs smoothing their locks in the mirror of a fountain. At a short distance, a clump of oaks and chestnuts, which look as if they had been sown by the hand of art, have formed a kind of natural arbor, the shade of which is inviting to meditative feet. Under these trees

Mr. Prescott has passed many studious hours, and his steps, as he has paced to and fro, have worn a perceptible path in the turf. A few rods from the house, towards the east, is another and larger pond, near which is a grove of vigorous oaks; and, in the same direction, about half a mile farther, is an extensive piece of natural woodland, through which winding paths are traced, in which a lover of nature may soon bury himself in primeval shades, under broad-armed trees which have witnessed the stealthy step of the Indian hunter, and shutting out the sights and sounds of artificial life, hear only the rustling of leaves, the tap of a woodpecker, the dropping of nuts, the whir of a partridge, or the iron call of a sentinel crow.

The house is not occupied by the family during the heats of summer; but they remove to it as soon as the cool mornings and evenings proclaim that summer is over. The region is one which appears to peculiar advantage under an autumnal sky. The slopes and uplands are gay with the orange and crimson of the maples, the sober scarlet and brown of the oaks, and the warm yellow of the hickories. A delicate gold-dust vapor hangs in the air, wraps the valleys in dreamy folds, and softens all the distant outlines. The bracing air and elastic turf invite to long walks or rides, the warm noons are delightful for driving; and the country in the neighborhood, veined with roads and lanes that wind and turn and make no haste to come to an end, is well suited for all these forms of exercise. There is a boat on the Nissitisset for those who are fond of aquatic excursions, and a closet-full of books for a rainy day. Among these are two works which seem in perfect unison

with the older portion of the house and its ancient furniture — Theobald's Shakspeare and an early edition of the Spectator — both bound in snuff-colored calf, and printed on paper yellow with age; and the latter adorned with those delicious copperplate engravings which perpetuate a costume so ludicrously absurd, that the wonder is that the wearers could ever have left off laughing at each other long enough to attend to any of the business of life. When the cool evenings begin to set in with something of a wintry chill in the air, wood-fires are kindled in the spacious chimneys, which animate the low ceilings with their restless gleams, and when they have burned down, the dying embers diffuse a ruddy glow, which is just the light to tell a ghost-story by, such as may befit the narrow rambling passages of the old farmhouse, and send a rosy cheek to bed a little paler than usual.

While Mr. Prescott is at Pepperell, a portion of every day is given to study; and the remainder is spent in long walks or drives, in listening to reading, or in the social circle of his family and guests. Under his roof there is always house-room and heart-room for his own friends and those of his children. Indeed, he has followed the advice of some wise man — Dr. Johnson, perhaps, upon whom all vagrant scraps of wisdom are fathered — and kept his friendships in repair, making the friends of his children his own friends. There are many persons, not members of the family, who have become extremely attached to the place, from the happy hours they have spent there. There may be seen upon the window-sill of one of the rooms a few lines in pencil, by a young lady whose beauty and sweetness make

her a great favorite among her friends, expressing her sense of a delightful visit made there, some two or three years since. Had similar records been left by all, of the happy days passed under this roof, the walls of the house would be hardly enough to hold them.

And this sketch may be fitly concluded with the expression of an earnest wish that thus it may long be. May the future be like the past. May the hours which pass over a house honored by so much worth and endeared by so much kindness, bring with them no other sorrows than such as the providence of God has inseparably linked to our mortal state — such as soften and elevate the heart, and, by gently weaning it from earth, help to "dress the soul" for its new home.

In reply to the publisher's request for a page of Mr. Prescott's manuscript, to be copied in fac-simile, the following interesting note has been received:

"Nahant, July 9, 1852.

"My dear Sir:

"As you desire, I send you a specimen of my autograph. It is the concluding page of one of the chapters of the "Conquest of Peru"—Book III., Cap. 3. The writing is not, as you may imagine, made by a pencil, but is indelible, being made with an apparatus used by the blind. This is a very simple affair, consisting of a frame of the size of a common sheet of letter-paper, with brass wires inserted in

it to correspond with the number of lines wanted. On one side of this frame is pasted a leaf of thin carbonated paper, such as is used to obtain duplicates. Instead of a pen, the writer makes use of a stylus, of ivory or agate, the last better or harder. The great difficulties in the way of a blind man's writing in the usual manner, arise from his not knowing when the ink is exhausted in his pen, and when his lines run into one another. Both difficulties are obviated by this simple writing-case, which enables one to do his work as well in the dark as in the light. Though my trouble is not blindness, but a disorder of the nerve of the eye, the effect, as far as this is concerned, is the same, and I am wholly incapacitated for writing in the ordinary way. In this manner I have written every word of my *historicals*. This *modus operandi* exposes one to some embarrassments; for, as one cannot see what he is doing on the other side of the paper, any more than a performer in the treadmill sees what he is grinding on the other side of the wall, it becomes very difficult to make corrections. This requires the subject to be pretty thoroughly canvassed in the mind, and all the blots and erasures to be made there before taking up the pen, or rather the stylus. This compels me to go over my composition to the extent of a whole chapter, however long it may be, several times in my mind before setting down to my desk. When there, the work becomes one of memory rather than of creation, and the writing is apt to run off glibly enough. A letter which I received some years since from the French historian, Thierry, who is totally blind, urged me by all means to cultivate the habit of dictation, to which he had resorted; and James, the eminent novelist,

who has adopted his habits, finds it favorable to facility of composition. But I have been too long accustomed to my own way to change. And, to say truth, I never dictated a sentence in my life for publication, without its falling so flat on my ear that I felt almost ashamed to send it to the press. I suppose it is habit.

"One thing I may add. My manuscript is usually too illegible (I have sent you a favorable specimen) for the press, and it is always fairly copied by an amanuensis before it is consigned to the printer. I have accompanied the autograph with these explanations, which are at your service, if you think they will have interest for your readers. My *modus operandi* has the merit of novelty, at least I have never heard of any history monger who has adopted it besides myself.

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Very truly yours,

"Wm. H. Prescott."

with all commotion, adieu. "Let us wherever you Ranch lead. The only fetter we find wide, and you shall see that we can die as Daring Men in the cause of God & Liberty." Then we no more began hostilities. All Rights were now vested in the united Legislature of the Confederacy.

Forgive me the ones
perhaps in pain there of the truth
and mercy, abundance when I weaken
the heart of the soldier more than
the pounds of the arms and or times
than of adventure The rest a soldier
himself, and portrait with the Scotch
feelings of the soldiers, his joys, his

not elevation of the French [illegible]

by means of education always sympathy

with the husband of the Parliament.

Every effort is [illegible] made

with the same patience as the

own; and to encourage of that sure

from a mother over Rhine "Lead on"

they [illegible] shouted [illegible] as the [illegible]

Miss C. M. Sedgwick.

C. M. SEDGWICK.

PERHAPS it is not to be wondered at that Home should be the prominent idea on Miss Sedgwick's mind, throughout a literary career which has made her name dear to her country. Every novel, and essay, and touching story that has ever fallen from her pen — we choose our words advisedly, to express the graceful ease which characterizes her writings — has the thought of Home, like a sweet undersong, beneath all the rich foliage of fancy and gleams of heroic feeling. Her heroines are rich in home qualities; her plots all revolve round the home centre; her hints touch — gently or strongly — on the sacrifices and errors that make home happy or miserable. In those admirable stories that seem like letters from an observing friend — those, we mean, that have an avowed moral purpose, like "Live and let Live," the "Rich poor Man and poor Rich Man" — imagination and memory are evidently tasked for every phase of common social experience that can by example or contrast throw light upon the great problem — how to

make a happy home under disadvantages both of fortune and character. She might be well painted as a priestess tending the domestic altar — shedding light upon it — setting its holy symbols in order due, and hanging it with votive wreaths, that may both render it proper honor, and attract the careless or the unwilling. If all lady-writers who could boast masculine understanding had possessed also the truly feminine spirit which breathes throughout Miss Sedgwick's writings, even where they are strongest and boldest for truth and virtue, some of the satire which has pursued the gentler sex when they have ventured to practise the "gentle craft," might have been spared. We are ready to say, when we read Miss Sedgwick — "True woman, true teacher," since no true teaching is accomplished without Love.

Besides this home charm, Miss Sedgwick's writings have no little value as natural pictures; and pictures, too, of a transition state, of which it will be, at no distant day, difficult to catch the features, except through the delineations of contemporary novelists. That great photograph, the newspaper, gives back the features of the time with severer accuracy; but as the portrait is to the daguerreotype, so is the novel to the newspaper. Miss Sedgwick and Mr. Cooper may be considered pioneers in this excellent work— the delineation of American life and character, with proper accompaniments of American scenery. The homely rural life of our country appears in the New England Tale under a touch as delicate as skilful, while the manes of our forefathers are shadowed forth in "Hope Leslie," with a loving truthfulness for which old chronicles vouch amply.

National feeling is strong in Miss Sedgwick, and she is neither meanly ashamed of it nor weakly inclined to parade it. It comes out because it is there, and not because it is called for. Foreign travel has not stifled it, nor much intercourse with the high civilization of older countries tinged it with sadness or made it morose. Ever kind and hopeful, it still disdains flattery, and while it loves and praises generously, it is not afraid to condemn with equal justice. Our western world is so sensible of this kindness and this firmness, that although it is prone to resent even clearer truths, especially when they grate on national vanity, it hears Miss Sedgwick always with something more than patience and respect.

In delineating individual character, it is possible to let an amiable disposition lower the contrasts which are essential to vigorous impressions. This occasions the only fault we are disposed to find with Miss Sedgwick's novels. They lack strongly-marked character; they smooth rough points too much; they hesitate at horrors, moral ones at least. If the world were really made up of so large a proportion of pretty good people, with a sprinkling of angels, and only now and then a compunctiously half-bad man or woman, novels would never have been written, or if they had, would hardly have become one of the elixirs to so great a portion of the weary children of earth. The imagination is not satisfied with truth, it asks the stimulus of high-wrought truth — unusual — distinct — startling. It will not do for a writer to be too restrictedly conscientious in this matter. If it be true that "*le vrai n'est pas toujours le vraisemblable*," it is also true that the "*vraisemblable*" does not include the entire

"*vrai*." With this single complaint of unnecessary "toning down," let us dismiss the ungracious task of fault-finding.

To make virtue lovely, is one of the achievements of the good. To draw such pictures of excellence as shall incite to imitation, is far less easy, if more pleasant, than to dash off vice and crime by wholesale with the intent of warning. Bugbears have little power after the bread and butter age, while self-sacrifice, tenderness and heroism possess—Heaven be praised for it—undying interest, and always find some sensitive chords even in the mind most sadly unstrung. Here we indicate Miss Sedgwick's *forte*—it is to touch the heart by examples of domestic goodness, not so exalted as to preclude emulation, but so exquisitely human and natural as to call up all that is best and sweetest in the heart's impulses, and throw us back upon ourselves with salutary comparisons and forward with pure resolutions. We have heard the remark from those well qualified to judge, that Miss Sedgwick's writings had done much towards prompting aspiration and high resolve in young men; how much wider must have been her influence over her own sex—over the daughters and the mothers of her country! Here is wherewithal not to boast, but to be thankful; occasion—not for pride, but for self-consecration; and as such we doubt not Miss Sedgwick looks upon her great success. Even on the wide field of our common schools, the influence of that excellent manual, "Means and Ends," is daily felt; and we can desire nothing better than that every American girl, whatever her position in life, may be prompted by it to "self-training," on the best plan and the best principles.

If it could be conceded that the character of every writer

is legibly impressed on his works, we need say nothing of that of Miss Sedgwick. But, though it may be true that a man always "writes himself down" to some extent, unhappy instances are not wanting to prove that we may sometimes grossly mistake the true character of a professor of tender sensibilities, or heedlessly ascribe the rough or self-depreciating expressions of a humorist to harshness or want of feeling. It would be invidious to point out examples of this at any time near our own, and Sterne has been too often cited. But we may remark that a tender, humane and generous character, at once gentle and courageous, modest and independent — is impressed on the whole series of Miss Sedgwick's works, we might almost say on every page of them. She makes few professions or none; she speaks in her own person only with reluctance; her sketches of exalted goodness are free from all taint of parade; yet against her will we see her own heart and habits through whatever veil of fictitious form; we need never ask what manner of woman is this; we can feel the very beaming of her eye when she utters high thoughts, and we never for a moment doubt that when our hearts are stirred, hers is stirred also.

At least it is so with us who know her. Perhaps we are poor judges of what strangers may think on this point. To her friends, the very lines of Miss Sedgwick's harmonious face accord sweetly with the spirit of all she has written. We read there such a sympathy with suffering, such ardor in the cause of struggling virtue, as will allow her no self-complacent ease when action is called for. Outlines which might well by the careless observer be called aristocratic, her friends more justly denominate noble, since to them

they express feelings to which nothing that belongs to humanity can be indifferent. It is beautiful to see elegant tastes and habits of the greatest refinement no hindrance to a truly democratic respect for the lowest and care for the worst. Hers is not the goodness which the French aptly term *musquée*, which requires that its objects be fashionable or picturesque. The high-toned sympathy which lent itself so gracefully and naturally, as well as with such excellent results, to the exalted aims of Kossuth, becomes lowly pity and a kindness that nothing can shock when its object is a wretched woman, released from prison only to undergo the heavier penance of universal contempt and avoidance. If Miss Sedgwick had never become celebrated as a writer, it is of her humanity that those who know her would have spoken as her leading trait; and in her humanity the care of her own sex occupies the leading place, as is meet. Sympathy with the unhappy disputes the empire of her heart with that attachment to family and friends which accords so well with her efforts to glorify the private home in the public estimation. We can regret this overflowing affectionateness only on one account — because the demands of generosity, pity and friendship, upon Miss Sedgwick's time and powers, leave her little leisure for the production of new works which would both delight and improve society at large. May long life and health be granted her, to do all that her vigorous intellect can devise and her kind heart desire!

To the above appreciative and genial sketch by a kindred spirit, the editor has merely to add these personal facts from Mr. Griswold's "Prose Writers":

"Miss Sedgwick was one of the first Americans of her sex who were distinguished in the republic of letters, and in the generous rivalry of women of genius which marks the present age, she continues to occupy a conspicuous and most honorable position. She is of a family which has contributed some of its brightest names to Massachusetts. Her father, who was descended from one of the major-generals in the service of Cromwell, enjoyed a high reputation as a statesman and a jurist, and was successively an officer in the revolutionary army, a representative and senator in Congress, and a judge of the supreme court of his state. Her brother Henry, who died in 1831, was an able lawyer and political writer, and another brother, the late Theodore Sedgwick, was also distinguished as a statesman and an author.*

"Miss Sedgwick was born in the beautiful rural village of Stockbridge, on the river Housatonic, to which her father had removed in 1787. Judge Sedgwick died in 1813, before his daughter had given any indications of literary ability, but her brother Henry, who had been among the first to appreciate the genius of Bryant,† soon discovered and encouraged the development of her dormant powers. The earliest of her published works was the New England Tale, originally intended to appear as a religious tract, but which

* The most considerable work of Mr. Sedgwick is his Public and Private Economy, in three volumes, published by Harpers.

† It was chiefly through the influence of Henry Sedgwick's persuasions that Mr. Bryant was induced to remove to New-York, from the neighboring village of Great Barrington, where he was engaged in the uncongenial pursuits of a country lawyer; and it was through Mr. Sedgwick's means that he first became connected with the Evening Post.

grew beyond the limits of such a design, and was given to the world in a volume in 1822. This was followed, in 1824, by 'Redwood,' a novel which was immediately and widely popular; in 1827 by 'Hope Leslie, or Early Times in Massachusetts,' by which her reputation was yet more extended; in 1830 by 'Clarence, a Tale of our own Times,' which was inferior in merit, though received with equal favor; in 1832 by 'Le Bossu,' one of the Tales of the Glauber Spa, and in 1835 by 'The Linwoods, or "Sixty Years Since" in America,' the last and in some respects the best of her novels. In the same year she also published a collection of tales and sketches which had previously appeared in various periodicals.

"In 1834 Miss Sedgwick gave the public the first of a new and admirable series of illustrations of common life, under the title of 'Home,' which was followed in 1836 by 'The Poor Rich Man and the Rich Poor Man,' and subsequently by 'Live and Let Live' and 'Means and Ends, or Self-training,' 'A Love Token for Children,' and 'Stories for Young Persons.'

"In the spring of 1839 she went to Europe, and in the year which she spent in travelling, wrote her 'Letters from Abroad to Kindred at Home,' which were published in two volumes soon after her return.

"Besides the works already mentioned, Miss Sedgwick has written a Life of Lucretia M. Davidson, and many contributions to annuals and literary magazines.

"Miss Sedgwick has marked individuality. She commands as much respect by her virtues as she does admiration by her talents. Indeed, the rare endowments of her

mind depend in an unusual degree upon the moral qualities with which they are united for their value. She writes with a higher object than merely to amuse. Animated by a cheerful philosophy, and anxious to pour its sunshine into every place where there is lurking care or suffering, she selects for illustration the scenes of every-day experience, paints them with exact fidelity, and seeks to diffuse over the mind a delicious serenity, and in the heart kind feelings and sympathies, and wise ambition, and steady hope. A truly American spirit pervades her works. She speaks of our country as one 'where the government and institutions are based on the *gospel principle* of equal rights and equal privileges to all,' and denies that honor and shame depend upon condition. She is the champion of the virtuous poor, and selecting her heroes and heroines from humble life, does not deem it necessary that by tricks upon them in the cradle they have been only temporarily banished from a patrician caste and estate to which they were born.

"Her style is colloquial, picturesque, and marked by a facile grace which is evidently a gift of nature. Her characters are nicely drawn and delicately contrasted. Her Deborah Lenox has remarkable merit as a creation and as an impersonation, and it is perfectly indigenous. The same can be said of several others. Miss Sedgwick's delineations of New England manners are decidedly the best that have appeared, and show both a careful study and a just appreciation."

Miss Sedgwick has passed much of her time at Stockbridge, where she was born, and where the family of her

late brother Theodore continues to reside. But of late years her home has been divided between the residence of her friends in New-York and that of her brother Charles, at Lenox, Berkshire county, Mass. A description of her parental home has been kindly communicated by the one, of all others, who could do it best:

"A comfortable rural mansion, some fifty feet square, built, without architectural adornments, for the modest wants of a country gentleman of 'sixty years since,' is here presented, faithfully, from a sketch made by one of his descendants, who lives still at the old homestead, enriching by her daily life its sacred associations.

"The view is taken from the meadow below the south entrance of the house, and admits a few only of the trees that on every other side shelter and obscure it, and under whose shadows the fourth generation from him who planted them now plays.

"A small curve of the semicircular slope from 'Stockbridge plain,' on which the house stands, a piece of the rich alluvial meadow below it, and a glimpse of the Housatonic river, the living spirit of the valleys to which it gives its name, are the only objects that could be included within the narrow limits of this sketch.

"Would that the pen could supply the beauties excluded by the narrow space allotted to the pencil! and present to the mind's eye the deep-set valley in the very heart of which the old mansion stands,* on 'Stockbridge plain.' Thus the

* "This is no figure of speech. The lot west of the house, known to the family as the 'Elizabeth lot,' (a name derived from the old Indian woman whose baptismal designation it was, and whose wigwam stood on it,) was originally



perfectly level strip of land hemmed in between the upland and the meadows was designated by the first Yengees (English) who came over the mountains from Connecticut river, and, preferring home memorials to designations that to them seemed barbarous and unmeaning, baptized the valleys of the Housatonic with old-world names.

"How far the judgment may be biassed and the senses bewitched by early love, by long association, and by the illusions of fond memories, I cannot pretend to say; but to one who has been young and grown old in familiarity with it, 'Stockbridge plain' realizes the beau-ideal of a village—just such a village as a poet dreams of when he gives a local habitation to rural beauty and 'country contentments.' It is enclosed, like the happy valley of Rasselas, by a circuit of hills, wooded to their tops, which we, somewhat ambitiously, call mountains, since the very highest of them does not rise more than eight hundred feet above the meadows. Midway

called Manwootania, middle of the town—the town was six miles square. Those who are curious in such matters may like to see the Indian names of localities related to this old homestead. *Housatonic* is a corruption of *Aweestonook* ('over the mountain')—the name in the Indian day was borne by the valley as well as the river. *Kunkapot* is still the name of a little brook that so lazily winds through the meadows that it seems almost to sleep in its rich bed there. *Kachpechuck* ('nation's sugar-place') is the beautiful little meadow between Stockbridge and Lee, a gem—an emerald gem, deep set in the hills. *Kachpeehuchtchoo* is the precipitous green mountain-wall south of it. *Taheecanuck* ('the heart')—a long hill running east and west, which hides the valley of Stockbridge from Lenox. The name was given as an affectionate memorial of some kindness between the Indians and white people. Is there treachery implied in its present designation, Rattlesnake Mountain? *Masswasseehaich* ('a nest') Monument Mountain. *Maheecanew*, the name of the tribe from which the Stockbridge Indians came, corrupted to Mohigan."

of the plain is a long wide street, gently rising at the eastern extremity, and by a slight curve vanishing within the shadow of trees in their 'summer pride,' impenetrable to the eye. The view at the western end, where stands the church, and the burying-ground thick-set with monumental stones, is closed by the site of the old missionary-house and the mountain beyond it. The wide street is embowered, and its monotony broken by fine sugar-maples and elms that seem lovingly to clasp it in their far-stretching arms.

"On each side the street, with well trimmed adjoining gardens and deeply-shaded court-yards in front, are neat dwellings, indicative of cultivated and refined proprietors, an aspect rather idiosyncratic in our land. There is not a single 'Italian villa,' no 'Grecian front,' not one wooden Corinthian column without a capital, nor a capital without a column! no architectural absurdity indicating ignorant imitation or fatuous aspiration. But there is a filial conservatism, a reverence for the past, demonstrated in a careful repair and scrupulous preservation of ancestral homes. This diffuses a sort of sentiment over the village plain, which he who runs may read.

"Several of the best houses are tenanted by women. The prosperity and beauty about them is a formidable argument in favor of the capacity of the sex to be the managers of their own property! These are the kind of arguments which can be most potently and most gracefully used by those who contend for the 'rights of women,' and against which, even those that are confuted by them may be willing *not* to 'argue still.'

"Between the eastern extremity of the plain and the

river is a circular hill, rising, it may be, 150 feet above the valley, covered with trees and a thick undergrowth of calmias. From them it takes its name, 'Laurel-hill.'

> 'The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors
> And poets sage.'

Not in our humble life! where it merely serves to deck its mother earth.

"Well-trodden paths wind around Laurel-hill from its base to its summit. The old man may go to the very top without toil or weariness, stopping at the turns and rustic seats, to look through the frame-work of trees at such lovely pictures as may be made by a village, meadows, harvest-fields, circling hills, and the Housatonic, which winds half around it. On one side Laurel-hill is rocky and precipitous. Its crown is called 'sacrifice-rock,' a name given to it by an indigenous romance writer, who naturally enough transferred to her pages the impressions her childhood received there. Laurel-hill was at one time in danger of being denuded by some of Pluto's demons to fill a coal-pit. It was rescued by the Sedgwick family, and given to the village in perpetuity.

"May it remain for ages the resort of the thoughtful, the refreshment of the aged, and the favorite play-ground of happy children, who shall make it echo, as it now does, to the healthy music of their glad voices!

"Beyond the plain, above, below and around, stretch meadows, uplands and lowlands, in every variety of beautiful form and gradation of cultivation. Small lakes, or, in our homely dialect, 'ponds,' open their blue eyes among the hills in various parts of the town. The largest is some three

miles from the village. The name by which it was known to its original and rightful proprietors was Quecheeochook (Anglice 'the bowl'). Quite latterly, it has been called by a little girl, who seems merely to have given voice to a self-impressed name, 'the mountain mirror.' And though the name is somewhat fantastical, it seems from its descriptiveness to have been acceptable. The border of this lake has already been selected by a gentleman of taste for his country home. Others will soon follow this pioneer, for many who are now doomed to

'Scrawl strange words with a barbarous pen,'

or to fret and stifle in those haunts where 'merchants most do congregate,' are looking to the vallies of Berkshire as their land of promise.

"Hawthorne, the wizard writer of our land, perched for a year just on the rim of 'the bowl,' and in his 'wonder book' has cast his spells around it. To us we confess it derives its dearest association from being the fishing-ground of a great dramatic genius—our most dear friend—her favorite resort, where she saw visions, and dreamed of laying the foundations of a future home.

"In turning back the volume of life for half a century, how different from the present do we find the then modes of domestic life. Civilization has advanced—the social arts have developed. Has virtue made an equal progress? Is household life enriched?

"Rail-roads are of recent date. But in my childhood not even a 'turnpike' connected our village with the great marts (little marts then!) of New York and Boston, equidistant

from us. A ricketty mail-coach came once a week from New York. But with what eager expectation we watched it as it slowly crawled along the line of road visible from the piazza of the south entrance!* With what blissful emotions we hailed the mail that was sure to bring to each child a letter from the beloved parent in Congress at Philadelphia! Now, twice a day, the rail-cars come shrieking through the meadows of Awastonook, and twice a week they bring us European news—and scarcely a sensation is produced!

"Then how often the gate of the avenue to the old house was thrown wide open to receive political friends, or aristocratic guests, who had come in their own carriages a weary journey from their city homes—guests, servants, and horses, were all received with unostentatious but abounding hospitality. The doors opened as readily to troops of cousins, and humble friends, for those who dwelt there were much 'given to hospitality,' and though still retaining the prestiges of colonial life, they showed certain humane tendencies to slide down to the platform of their democratic descendants! Now your friend is a mere passenger in a rail-car, perchance driven past you as if the Fates were at his heels.

"Those were the days of the wide open fire-place, which, with its brilliant, crackling, bountiful fire, has made the good Saxon terms of 'fireside' and 'hearth-stone,' key-notes to household loves, and domestic charities.

"A winter's evening fire in the kitchen of the old house, stocked as it was in the days of its Founder with the African

* "The piazza, or *stoop*, (the word was borrowed from our Dutch neighbors on the New York border) has given place to the bay-windows seen in the vignette."

race, (free people all—gratias Deo!) would supply a month's fuel for one of the cruel, dark, cheerless stoves of the present day. I well remember how, as the night approached, a chain was fastened round a hickory log, and attached to a horse who drew it to the door-step. Then it was rolled to the huge fire-place by the men, shaking the house to its foundations! Then was brought the 'fore-stick' larger than any 'Yule-log' since the Norman conquest; then arm-full after arm-full was piled on till the structure would have served for the holocaust of an army. But its uses were of a gentler kind. Their easy day's work done, the genial children of a tropical sun sat jocund around, roasting and mellowing! These were their 'good old times,' before the Celts came in, the first days of their Independence in Massachusetts, and while they yet retained the habits of trained servants, and much of the affectionate loyalty of feudal service. The (so-called) slaves of New England were few, and were never degraded below the condition of serfs. They made a part of the domestic establishment. They were incorporated with the family, sometimes assuming the patronymic, and always claiming a participation in its honors, as a portion of their personal property. In the Farmer's household they sat, like Gurth and Wamba, 'below the salt' at their Master's table.

"The genius loci of the old Homestead kitchen was a noble creature, whose first free service was devoted to the family, and who watched over it with vigorous intelligence and unswerving fidelity till she died, loved and honored, in a good old age.*

* "While this woman was yet young, and a slave, her natural sense of right and justice was confirmed by hearing the 'Declaration of Independence' read. She

"There were other of the faithful servants of that day whose memories are embalmed at the old Homestead. One, named Agrippa, came to my father from Kosciusko, whom he had served during all his campaigns in this country. He did not entertain our childhood with the 'battles, sieges, fortunes,' of his hero, but with his practical jokes in camp, and his boyish love of fun. Agrippa lived to be a village sage, with something of the humorous pithiness of Sancho Panza, and much, as we thought, 'of the wisdom of Solomon.'

"Violin players maintain that the quality of their instrument is improved by age; that it is mysteriously enriched by the music it has produced in the hands of superior artists. If this be so, what secret records may have sunken into the walls of an old family home, consecrated by the domestic life of three happy generations!

"'The only bliss that has survived the Fall.'

Certain it is these walls of our old home give out to the attentive ear of memory the harmonies of family love — the soft glad whisper of the birth-day — the merry music of the marriage-bell — the shout of joyous meetings — the sighs of partings — the noisy, idle, and yet most wise joys of child-

came to my father respecting the clause which asserts that 'all men are born free and equal;' she said 'I am not a dumb *critter*, Sir, and I have a right to my freedom.' My father undertook the prosecution of her legal claim, and the result was the manumission of all the slaves in Massachusetts.

"From the hour of her emancipation she served in my father's house, and wrought into the hearts of his children a love for the race that had given to them a life-long friend, unsurpassed in practical intelligence, and rarely equalled in the Divine qualities of justice, truth and fidelity."

hood — the ringing gayeties of youth — the free, fearless discussions of manhood — the loving admonition of age — the funeral wail and lament! There we hold communion with 'spirits unseen,'

"'Both when we wake and when we sleep.'"

from England & France. No crusade could now be successfully pursued against dancing. Even the exotic phrases that characterized the position of our dramatis personæ have passed away & are forgotten — Thus if the coin we offer be neither gold nor silver, if it have no intrinsic value, we hope its impress will be an apology for its new issue, with those who have a fond or youthful love for the past —

The additional tales in the Volume will at least have the attraction

C. M. Sedgewick.
Fine Face to New England "Tales," ed 1852.

J. Fenimore Cooper.



J. Fenimore Cooper



COOPER.

EVERY reader of the "Pioneers" is familiar with Cooperstown and the rich forest scenery of Otsego Lake. One thing is wanting, however, to complete the picture of fifty years ago, a gray-eyed, dark-haired, ruddy boy, nimble as a deer and gay as a bird. You would have seen him on the lake, plying his oar lustily, or trimming his sail to the mountain breeze; and whenever he found a wave high enough to lift his little boat, his veins would thrill with a strange delight, and he would ask himself whether this was

like those ocean waves of which he had heard such wonders. Then perhaps he would pause to gaze on the green canopy of the woods, with sensations that made his heart beat fast and loud, or even called a tear to his eye, though why he could not tell,—those first revelations of the keener and purer joys which nature reserves for those who love and study her aright. When the breeze died away and the sun came out in its strength, he would turn his bow towards the shore. The forest leaves looked fresh and cool, and the light fell so softly and soothingly under the broad branches of those old trees. The deer would start and bound away as they heard his nimble tread, but the birds would let him pass unheeded, and sing to one another and hop from bough to bough, as if they knew that they were made for sunlight and song. And when they stopped for a moment, such a silence would fall on those deep woods, that even the dropping of a leaf would have something mysterious and thrilling about it. There would be something, too, of strangeness and mystery in the sky as he caught glimpses of its deep blue through the tremulous treetops, and a deeper mystery still in those long vistas under the pines where the sight would wander and wander on till it lost itself, at last, in mingling leaves and shade. And when in the evening circle he told the story of his roaming, they would warn him against straying too far, tell stories of lost children, of Indians that still lurked in the forests, and bears and catamounts and all the wild scenes of pioneer life. Little did they dream what seeds they were dropping into that young mind, and the delight which thousands would one day receive from the impressions of this boyhood among the woods.

Cooper was but an infant when he was first carried to Cooperstown. He was born at Burlington, New Jersey, on the 15th of September, 1789, and the little village, which was to be the home of his boyhood and his final resting-place, had been built by his father only three years before. Judge Templeton has always been supposed to be an outline sketch of that gentleman, and the "Pioneers" tells us what kind of a life was led in this home which he had made for himself in the wilderness. Perhaps the love of the water which led Cooper to the navy was first imbibed on the Otsego, and the associations with which he has invested old ocean for so many minds, would thus be owing to a quiet little lake among the hills. Never was the "child" more truly "father of the man" than in Cooper.

At thirteen he entered Yale, too young, if that favorite institution had been what it is now, but yet old enough to prove himself an apt and ready scholar. The poet Hillhouse was in the same class, and younger than he. Dr. Dwight was then President, with a well-won reputation as a teacher, and which has already outlived his claims as a poet. It would be interesting to know how the stripling who was to become one of the real founders of American literature, looked and felt in the presence of one of its earliest votaries. The young poet was something of a rogue, the old one not a little proud of his position; and it is difficult to withstand the temptation of indulging the fancy in some amusing scenes between them. The culprit looking straightforward with a funny mixture of drollery and indefinite dread of consequences in his clear, gray eye, and the old doctor bolt upright in his chair, with a thunder-cloud on

his brow, and measuring out his oppressive sentences with Johnsonian dignity. The only recorded expression, as far as we know, of Cooper's opinion of the poetical merits of his old master, is his answer to Godwin's reference to the "Conquest of Canaan" and "Vision of Columbus" as the only American poems that he had ever heard of,—"Oh, we can do better than that now."

College then as now, and perhaps even more than now, was the path to one of the learned professions; and Cooper, whose tastes led him to seek for a more adventurous career, left it in his fourth year for the navy. There were no schools in our navy then, and it was common for the young candidate for nautical honors to make a voyage before the mast in a merchantman, by way of initiation; a custom which Cooper, in looking back upon his own course from an interval of forty years, is far from approving. In his case, however, few will regret it. It was his first intercourse with sailors, his first initiation into the hardships and enjoyments, the pains and the pleasures of sea-life, which he surely could never have painted so truthfully but for that year and a half in the forecastle.

An old shipmate has recorded his first appearance, when he came down to the Sterling under the care of a merchant, to look about him and sign the articles. The next day he made his appearance in full sailor rig: the ship was taken into the stream, and his new companions came tumbling on board, a medley of nations, agreeing only in what was then the almost universal characteristic of a sailor on shore, the being or having been drunk. Night, however, put them in sufficient working trim, and when all hands were called to

get the ship under way, Cooper was sent aloft with another boy to loose the foretopsail. He set himself to his task with characteristic earnestness, and was tugging stoutly at "the robins," when the second mate came up just in time to prevent him from dropping his half of the sail into the top. Fortunately the mate was too good-natured to be hard upon a raw hand, and the men too busy with their own work to see what was going on aloft. But he soon found an "old salt" who taught him to knot and splice, very much as "Long Tom" taught Barnstable, and when they got on shore Cooper repaid the debt by historical anecdotes of the places they visited together.

Captain Johnston was a kind man, part owner as well as commander, and doubly interested in making a good voyage. The passage, however, was long and stormy, nearly forty days from land to land, and Cooper's first view of England was through its native veil of fog. The whole country was in arms, for it was in the time of the threatened invasion by Napoleon. As they passed the straits of Dover at daybreak, they counted forty odd sail of vessels of war, returning from their night-watch in those narrow seas; and every one who remembers his own first impressions of striking scenes, will readily conceive how deeply the mind of a young poet must have been impressed by so striking a scene as this. It was a practical illustration of the watchfulness and naval power of the English which he never forgot.

It was in a round-jacket and tarpaulin that the future guest of Rogers and Holland house first set his foot on English ground, his imagination glowing with the recollection of all that he had heard and read of her glory and her power,

and his heart thrilled with the thought that this was the land of his fathers. He was soon at home in London, ran through the usual round of sights, peered from under his tarpaulin at the wonders of the Tower and the beauties of the "West End," and at evening amused the forecastle with tales and descriptions from the scenes of his day's ramble.

The voyage was long and successful. It gave him a rough experience of the Bay of Biscay, carried him up the straits, afforded a running view of the coasts of Spain and Africa, made him familiar with the headlands and coasts of the channel and the hazardous navigation of those crowded waters, stored his memory with scenes and incidents and outlines of character, and while it fitted him for the immediate duties of his profession, prepared him also for those vivid pictures of sea-life which have made ships as familiar to hundreds who never looked upon the ocean as to those who were born upon its shores.

In the Bay of Biscay they were brought to by a pirate, and only escaped by the timely appearance of an English cruiser. They ran into the straits in thick westerly weather. Lord Collingwood's fleet was off Cape Trafalgar, and the captain, well aware of the danger of being run down in the night, had come on deck, in the middle watch, to see that there was a sharp look-out on the forecastle. He had scarcely given his orders, when the alarm of sail ho! was heard, and a two-decker was descried through the dark and mist bearing directly down upon them. The captain ordered the helm hard up, and called to Cooper to bring a light. With one leap he was in the cabin, seized the light, and in half a minute was swinging it from the mizzen rigging. His

promptness saved the ship. The two vessels were so near that the voice of the officer of the deck was distinctly heard calling to his own quartermaster to "port his helm," and as the enormous mass swept by them, it seemed as if she was about to crush their railing with the muzzle of her guns. While lying off the old Moorish town of Almaria, Cooper was sent on shore in the jolly-boat to boil pitch. As they were coming off they saw that things looked squally, and that they would find it no easy work to get through the surf. But their orders were peremptory, and delay would only have made matters worse. So off they started, and for a minute or two got on pretty well, when all of a sudden a breaker "took the bow of the boat, and lifting her almost on end, turned her keel uppermost." All hands got safe on shore, though none could tell how, and launching their boat again, made a second attempt with a similar result. It was not till a third trial that they were able to force their way through the surf.

There was another kind of experience, too, which Cooper added to his stock during this memorable voyage. The Sterling had hardly dropped her anchor in English waters before she was boarded by a man-of-war's boat, and one of her best men taken from her to be forced into the British navy, another of them only escaping by having a certificate which the officer could not refuse to acknowledge, though he had refused to acknowledge his "protection." At London another was lost, and the captain himself was seized by a press-gang. On their return passage, just as they were running out, they were boarded by a gun-boat officer, who attempted to press a Swede. Cooper could not stand this

insult to his flag, and was in high words with the Englishman, when the captain compelled him to restrain himself and be silent. Such were some of his first lessons in this rough but manly school.

He now entered the navy, and continued the study of his profession in its higher walks. How successful these studies were he has already proved by his writings; and years ago we heard him described by a brother officer, who knew him well, as active, prompt, and efficient, a pleasant shipmate, always ready to do his duty, and rigorous, too, in exacting it from others. Many of his old messmates are still alive. Why will not some of them give us their recollections of this portion of his life? As it is, we can only judge it by its results; and the "Pilot," with its followers the "Naval History," and "Naval Commanders," are the noblest tribute ever paid to a noble profession.

And here, if we were writing a full life, the first and most important chapter would end. The lessons of the forest are blended with the lessons of the sea; the rough tales of the forecastle have mingled with the wild traditions of the frontiers; and the day-dreams of the woods and gentle waters of Otsego have been expanded into the broader visions of the ocean, and chastened by the stern realities of real life. The elements of his future career were already combined, and awaited only the completion of that sure, though silent process, by which nature prepares the mysterious development of genius.

Few men have been more favorably situated during this decisive period of life. He had resigned his commission in 1811, and married Miss Delancey, whose gentle character

and domestic tastes were admirably fitted to call out the deep affections of his own nature, and favor that grateful intermingling of action and repose which are so essential to vigor and freshness of mind. He had established himself in a quiet little house, which is still standing, at Mamaroneck, in Westchester county, not so near to the city as in these days of railroads and steamers, but near enough to make an excursion easy, and enable him to see his friends whenever he chose. He loved his books, he loved the quiet life of the country, he loved the calm sunshine of his home, and the days glided smoothly away, scarcely revealing to him or to those around him, the powers which were rapidly maturing in this voluntary obscurity. It was this seeming monotony that furnished the occasion which first revealed his real calling. He was reading a new novel to his wife: "Pshaw," said he, "I can write a better one myself:" and to prove that he was in earnest, he set himself directly to the task, and wrote the first chapter of "Precaution." "Go on," was Mrs. Cooper's advice, when she had listened to it as a young wife may be supposed to listen to the first pages from her husband's pen. The work was completed: a friend in whose literary judgment he placed great confidence, the late Charles Wilkes, confirmed the decision of his wife, and "Precaution" was printed.

It can hardly be said to have been a successful book. The scene was laid in England. He was drawing upon his recollections of books, rather than his own observations of life, and the society which he had undertaken to paint was altogether unsuited to that freshness of thought and scenery in which his strength peculiarly lay. Yet the work for him

was a very important one. He had overcome the first difficulties of authorship; had framed a plot and developed it; invented characters, and made them act and speak; and learnt how to make his pen obey his will through two consecutive volumes. In authorship, as in many other things, it is the first step that is the hard one.

His vocation was now decided. His active mind had found its natural outlet. The mechanical labor of authorship was overcome, and yielding to the impulse of his genius, he took his station boldly on his native soil, amid the scenes of American history, and wrote the "Spy."

The time will come when we shall feel far more deeply than we now do, how great an event this was in the history of American literature. It is easy to be an author now. Literature has become a recognized profession, and brings its rewards as well as its trials. We have it, therefore, in all its forms, and abundantly. We have its butterflies and its moths, its vampyres and its jackals, and we have, too, earnest minds, and men who think boldly and labor manfully in their high calling. And we have them, because at the very moment when we needed it most, there were a few minds among us which had the energy and the independence to mark out for themselves a course of their own, and persevere in it resolutely. But the task was a harder one than we can fully realize. Cooper's strong American feelings were so well known to his friends, that they had not hesitated to tell him how much they were surprised at his choice of a subject for his first work. He accepted the censure, and resolved to atone for his error. But the prospect of success was so small, that it was not till several months after the

first volume had been printed that he could summon up resolution enough to begin the second. Then, too, as this was slowly making its way through the press, the scarcely dried manuscript passing directly from the author's desk to the compositor, the publisher became alarmed at the prospect of a large volume; and to calm his apprehensions, the last chapter was written, paged and printed, before half of its immediate predecessors had even been thought of.

The success of the 'Spy' was complete, and almost immediate. It was not merely a triumph, but a revelation, for it showed that our own society and history, young as they were, could furnish characters and incidents for the most inviting form of romance. There was a truthfulness about it which everybody could feel, and which, in some of the countries where it has been translated, have given it the rank of a real history. And yet there was a skilful grouping of characters, a happy contrast of situations and interests, an intermingling of grave and gay, of individual eccentricities and natural feeling, a life in the narrative, and a graphic power in the descriptions, which in spite of some commonplace, and some defects in the artistic arrangement of the plot, raised it, at once, to the first class among works of the imagination. But its peculiar characteristic, and to which it owed, above all others, its rank as a work of invention, was the character of Harvey Birch.

Wordsworth had already shown how freely the elements of poetry are scattered through the walks of lowly life. The "Wanderer" was a beautiful illustration of the wisdom that lies hidden in the brooks and trees, and the pure sunshine of a mind that has chastened all inordinate desires, and

learnt to look upon nature and be happy. But temptation had never presented itself to him in its most dangerous form. His greatest peril had been a lonely walk over roads that were never wholly deserted, and his greatest self-denial, to throw off his pack when he felt that he had earned enough. Cooper was the first to take the humble son of toil, whose daily earnings were to be won at the daily hazard of life, and by planting the holy principle of faith and sacrifice in his bosom, raise him to the dignity of a patriot, without depriving him of the characteristics of a pedler. It is in this that he shows his genius. Many a happy conception has been destroyed for want of this nice discrimination, or rather this intuitive perception of the homogeneous elements of character; of what cannot be taken from it, and what cannot be engrafted upon it, without destroying it. Harvey is a pedler, with a pedler's habits and language, and in all that was essential to the preservation of his identity, a pedler's feelings. His pack is well filled with goods that he has chosen skilfully to meet the wants and excite the desires of his customers. When he opens it, he knows how to bring them out with effect, and get the most he can for them. You can see his eye twinkle with the keen delight of a shrewd bargain; and though he will not cheat you, and can be generous upon occasions, you feel that whatever may have driven him to trade in the beginning, more than half his soul is in it now. There is but one touch of poetry in him, and that is rather the effect of his position than of any inward sense of the poetical; objective rather than subjective. I mean the exquisite description of his feelings when led out into the sunshine to die. But for this, and you

would almost fancy that he had walked like Peter Bell through the loveliest scenes without any perception of their loveliness.

Thus shrewdness, resolution, and plain common sense, are the apparent traits of his character, and those, probably, by which he had been known among his customers and friends. Strange elements, it would seem, for the hero of a romance, but essential, for all that, to the keeping and harmony of the author's conception. Did you ever, in your journeyings, meet a brook, a calm, quiet, silent little stream, with just water enough to keep its banks green, or to turn a small grist-mill, and make itself useful? And did you ever follow that brook up to its birth-place among the mountains, where it first came gushing forth from some sunless cavern, and lay before you like a mysterious creation, with the dark shadows of cliffs and crags, and giant old trees on its bosom? It is the same brook still, the same pure current, the same cool and limpid waters; but if you had never seen them except as they flowed through the meadow, you would never have known how sweetly they could mingle with the solemn grandeur of the mountains.

Set the pedler and British general face to face, and let him watch the eye and the lips of the man who controls the fate of thousands, as he would the changing features of a customer that is haggling for a sixpence. Place him alone in the midst of enemies who are thirsting for his blood, and give him the same coolness and resolution with which he had faced robbers who asked him for nothing but his pack. Let the same common sense which had been his guide in trade, guide him still amid the crooks and tangles of policy,

and the dark passions of civil war; let human life, and at times even the fate of a nation depend upon his truth, and cutting him off from every hope of honor, leave him no stimulant but the love of country, and no reward but the consciousness of duty well performed, and the pedler, though a pedler still, becomes a hero.

The same originality of invention and admirable discrimination are found in his next great character, Leather Stocking. In all that relates to his calling, Leather Stocking, like Harvey Birch, is a simple and natural character. They have the same judgment and common sense. But the shrewdness which was so well placed in the tradesman, would have dwindled into littleness and cunning in the man of the woods. Simple-heartedness, and clear, quick perception, would be his natural characteristics. Resolution would become fortitude and daring; and those days and nights under the canopy of the green woods, or amid the falling leaves, or with the blasts of winter whistling around him, the sunlight falling through the opening tree-tops as it falls on the vaulted aisles of a cathedral, and the stars looking meekly out from their blue dwellings, still, and silent, and yet with something in their silence which thrilled and swelled the heart like choral symphonies, in the vast solitudes around him; these appeals of nature to the nobler and purer elements of our being, would awaken feelings that were unknown to those who sleep under close roofs, and tread the dusty thoroughfares of life; and "Leather Stocking," to be true to his nature, could not but be a poet.

The same may be said, in a certain degree, of "Long Tom," who looked upon the ocean as "Leather Stocking"

looked upon the forest, never feeling his heart at ease till the waves were bounding under him. God has spoken to him in the tempest, and he has bowed reverently to the awful voice. The elements with which he has contended from his childhood have a language for him. His eye reads it in the clouds, and the winds breathe it in his ear. He has looked upon the manifestations of their power till he has come to feel towards them as if there were something in them not wholly unlike to human passions and feelings; and without ceasing to recognize them as the instrument of a power still higher, he unconsciously extends to them somewhat of the reverence which he feels for that power himself.

But the life of a ship is not the life of the woods. Lonely as it may seem, it is the loneliness of a narrow circle — not the utter severing of social ties which suggest the unconscious soliloquies of the old woodsman.

Tom is always in the midst of his shipmates, separated from them by many traits of character, but bound to them by others, and with the example of human weakness constantly before him. Simple, upright, and single-hearted, tenacious of his opinion, firm in his conviction, and constant in his attachments, reminds you of "Leather Stocking" by these common traits of pure and earnest minds, but differs from him in every thing that should distinguish the child of the ocean from the child of the woods.

We have, then, three characters from the common walks of life, each admirably fitted for his humble calling, and all equally raised above it by traits perfectly consistent with all that it required or imposed. Love of country, pure and disinterested, make the pedler a hero; the intrepid, loyal,

upright, and devout character of the scout gives a charm and an authority to his judgments and his words, which mere rank and wealth can never command; and the simple-hearted coxswain, who draws you to him in life by his earnestness and purity, the defects as well as the beauties of his character, rises almost to the grandeur of martyrdom in his death. This power of elevating the lowly by the force of a high moral principle, was one of the most striking characteristics of Cooper's genius; and it is the more deserving of remark, inasmuch as it is a power which he drew from the peculiar elevation of his own moral nature. There has been but one man to whom it was given to look down upon human nature, as from some height that raised him far above its contaminations, and painting it in all its forms, its lights and its shades, its beauties and its deformities, leave you no other clue to his own character but the conviction that the mind which saw all things so truly, could not but love the good. In all writings but Shakspeare's, we judge the man by the book; and there are few who would come out from such a trial so honorably as Cooper.

The "Spy" was published in 1821; the "Pioneers" in 1823; then came the "Pilot," &c.; in 1826 he had covered the whole ground of his invention by the publication of the "Mohicans." It was not without some misgivings that he had ventured upon the "Pilot," for he well knew that the effect of a description depends upon the skilful use of details, and here the details, if strictly professional, might be unintelligible. The friends to whom he spoke of his plan tried to dissuade him from it. They had been so accustomed to look upon the ocean as a monotonous waste, that

they could not understand how it could be made interesting. More than once he was upon the point of throwing his manuscript into the fire. But the first thought of it had come to him by one of those sudden impulses to which we often cling more tenaciously than to designs that have been carefully matured. Scott had just published the "Pirate," which Cooper admired as a romance, but was unwilling to accept as an accurate picture of sea-life. The authorship of the "Waverley Novels" was still a secret, and one day, in discussing this point with a friend, it was argued that Scott could not have written them, because they displayed too minute and accurate an acquaintance with too wide a range of subjects. Where could he have made himself familiar enough with the sea, to write the "Pirate?" Cooper was by no means disposed to call the literary merits of the "Pirate" in question, but felt himself fully justified in disputing its seamanship. The only way of doing this was by writing a real tale of the sea, and the result was the "Pilot."

The first favorable opinion that he received was from an Englishman, a man of taste, and an intimate friend, but a skeptic in all that related to American genius. He read the sheets of the first volume, and to Cooper's great surprise pronounced it good.

As a still fuller test, he chose an old messmate for his critic, and read to him the greater part of the first volume, as Scott had read the hunting scene of the "Lady of the Lake" to an old sportsman. The first half hour was sufficient. As he came to the beating out of the "Devil's Grip," his auditor became restless, rose from his seat, and paced the

floor with feverish strides. There was no mistaking the impression, for not a detail escaped him. "It is all very well, my fine fellow, but you have let your jib stand too long." It was the counterpart of "He will spoil his dogs," of Scott's hunting critic. But Cooper, fully satisfied with the experiment, accepted the criticism, and blew his jib out of the bolt-ropes.

This was the period, too, in which he mingled most in the society of his own countrymen. Without absolutely removing to the city, he passed a good portion of the year there, taking an active part in many things which have left pleasant recollections, if not deep impressions, behind them. He was the founder of the "bread and cheese club" of which Bryant and Dr. Francis have given such agreeable sketches, and of which much more might be told that the world would be glad to know. He took a deep interest in the reception of Lafayette — one of the few incidents in our relations with the men who served us when service brought no reward, to which we can look back with pride. It was on this occasion that he gave that remarkable proof of his ready power of composition which Dr. Francis has recorded. The "Castle Garden Ball," was one of the great manifestations of the day; and Cooper, after exerting himself in getting it up, laboring hard all day in the preparations, and all night in carrying them out, repaired towards daylight to the office of his friend, Mr. Charles King, and wrote out a full and accurate report of the whole scene, which appeared next day in Mr. King's paper.

He had already formed, as early as 1823, the design of illustrating American scenery by a series of tales, and spoke

freely of it to his more intimate friends. Some of his excursions were studies of locality. For "Lionel Lincoln," he had visited Boston; and it may not be uninteresting to Rhode Islanders to know that part of that work was written in Providence, in a house yet standing, just on the verge of the old elm trees of College street. It was then, too, probably, that he studied the scene of the opening chapters of the "Red Rover."

Many a pleasant page might be filled with the records of these days: his studies of Shakspeare in the wonderful interpretations of Kean; his conversations with Mathew; his rambles with Dekay; his daily chit-chats and discussions with old messmates at the City Hotel, and a thousand other things, trifles often in themselves, but which, acting upon a mind by which so many other minds have been moved, would have a deep and permanent interest.

It would be pleasant, too, to meet him once more on his favorite element; follow him across the Atlantic; watch the effects of the scenery and society of the old world upon a mind so familiar with those of the new, and see how far the preference which he had so boldly avowed for the institutions of his own country, would be able to resist those temptations by which so many convictions have been shaken. His, however, were of surer growth.

When he sailed for Europe, in 1826, his American reputation was at its height. The department which he had chosen was so different from that of Mr. Irving, that no fair-minded reader ever thought of comparing them. Bryant and Halleck had published nothing in prose: and the graceful productions of Miss Sedgwick, although they belonged

to the same class, seemed to suggest a comparison with Miss Edgeworth's, rather than with his. His countrymen were proud of him. His friends expressed their sentiments by a public dinner — the first tribute of the kind, we believe, ever paid on this side of the Atlantic to literary eminence. And if ever ship went freighted with proud hopes and kind wishes, it was that which bore him in his second visit to the old world. How different from the first!

His reputation had preceded him. He was met with a kind welcome to the classic circle of Holland house; was soon on intimate terms with Rogers; Scott sought him out in Paris, and gladly renewed the acquaintance in London; he lived in friendly intimacy with Lafayette; and found, wherever he went, that kind of welcome which was most grateful to his earnest and independent character. He was fond of society. It was a pleasant study, and a kind of exercise, that seemed essential to him. His conversational powers were of a high order, and he loved to bring them out. But he was a good listener, and though tenacious of his opinions, a fair disputant. He was naturally fond, therefore, of the society of literary men, when he could meet them as men, and not as lions. "You learn nothing about a man," we once heard him say, "when you meet him at a show dinner, and he sits up to talk for you instead of talking with you. When I was in London, Wordsworth came to town, and I was asked to meet him at one of those displays; but I had seen enough of them already, and would not go." "But you met him afterwards, my dear," said Mrs. Cooper. "Yes, at Rogers's, and was very much pleased with him; but it was because I

met him in a place where he felt at home, and let himself out freely."

Cooper has told the history of the greater part of the next seven years in the ten volumes of his "Switzerland," and "Gleanings in Europe,"—one of his most characteristic works, fresh, firm and manly, full of beautiful descriptions, important remarks, and lively anecdotes, written exactly as he talked, and giving an accurate picture of his own mind. The part of his residence abroad to which he used to look back with most pleasure, was his visit to Italy, of which his two sunny little volumes are a true and delightful record. He had a singular tact in choosing his houses. In Florence he lived in a delightful little villa just a stone's throw from the city, where he could look out upon green leaves, and write to the music of birds. At Naples, after going the usual rounds, he settled himself for the summer in Tasso's villa, at Sorento, with that glorious view of sea, and bay, and city, and mountain under his eye, and the surf dashing almost directly under his windows.

Two or three years after his return, we met him one day in Broadway, just as we were upon the point of sailing for Europe again. He was walking leisurely along, with his coat open, and a great string of onions in his hand. We had nearly passed by without recognizing him, when seeing several people turn to look at him, and then speak to one another as if there was something worth observing, we turned too, and behold, it was Cooper. "I have turned farmer," said he, after the first greetings, and raising his bunch of onions, "but am obliged to come to town now and then, as you see." We asked him if he had any commands for Italy. "Re-

member me kindly to Greenough. I ought to write him, but I never can make up my mind to write a letter, when I can find any kind of a pretext for not writing it. He must trust to the regard which he knows I really do feel for him." "Do you not almost feel tempted to take a run back yourself?" "Yes, indeed. If there is any country out of my own in which I would wish to live, it is Italy. There is no place where mere living is such a luxury."

One thing, however, was very annoying to him, and that was the ignorance and prejudices of the English in all that related to America. It seemed to him, at times, as if they would have been much more cordial to him if he had been any thing but an American. He never let an opportunity slip him of standing up boldly and firmly for the institutions of his native country. It was with this feeling that he wrote the "Notions of a Travelling Bachelor,"—a work which should have made his countrymen pause a while, at least, before they accepted the calumnies which were heaped upon him for the patriotic though unwelcome truths of some of his subsequent volumes. While he was living in Paris a severe attack was made upon the economical system of the American government. Cooper came forward and refuted the ungrounded assertions of the royalists in a pamphlet, as remarkable for accuracy of information as for its energy and literary power. Government, which was then making war upon Lafayette, by calumniating the United States, was exceedingly irritated. The government papers continued their attacks, and enlisted an American in their service, who was afterwards rewarded by a Chargéship from our own government. Cooper stood his ground manfully,

meeting every assertion by unquestionable statistics and an array of facts and cogency of argument that set the question for ever at rest, for every candid inquirer.

He was equally earnest in bringing forward the claims of our poets. We have already alluded to his conversation with Godwin upon American literature. He had been exceedingly annoyed on that occasion, on finding that his memory, ever treacherous in quotations, would scarcely furnish him with a line of Bryant or Halleck to bear him out in his assertions. A few days afterward he was to meet a party at Rogers's, and resolving not to let his friends suffer by his want of memory, took a volume with him.

In Paris his style of living was an admirable illustration of his conceptions of the duties and position of an American gentleman. He occupied part of a handsome Hotel in the "rue St. Maur," keeping his carriage, and the service required by a genteel and modest establishment. His doors were always open to every American who had claims to his society; and you were sure to meet there the men of both countries whom you would most wish to know. One of his most intimate friends at this time was Morse, the inventor of the Telegraph: and the contrast of the two in their frequent rambles has furnished a lively and characteristic paragraph in Willis's "Pencillings by the Way." He was particularly fond of the society of artists, visiting them in their studios, welcoming them to his house, and wherever he felt that it was needed, giving or procuring them commissions. There is scarcely one, if there is even one, who visited Europe during those seven years, but what has brought back pleasant recollections of his intercourse with Cooper.

Meanwhile nothing was allowed to break in upon his literary duties. A portion of every day was set aside for composition; and by this systematic application, every twelve months told a tale of labor accomplished which seemed a mystery to those who were ignorant of the secret of his industry. The "Prairie" and "Red Rover" appeared when he had been abroad but little over a year; and five others were added to the list of his works before he returned in 1833, without counting the "Travelling Bachelor," the letters which formed the basis of his ten volumes upon Europe, and the controversy to which we have already alluded.

His time, after his return to the United States, was chiefly divided between New York, Philadelphia, and Cooperstown, where he had repaired the fine old mansion which his father had erected when the first hearthstone was laid on the shores of the Otsego. Originally it stood alone, with the lake before its doors, and the forest, which he has described so beautifully in the Pioneers, in full view on the right. But now the hamlet had grown to a village, and the village to a town, till the once almost solitary representative of civilization was surrounded by all the signs of a thriving and industrious population. Still, early associations and its own natural beauty, bound him to the spot; and to a mind like his, which looked upon the grave without fear, there must have been a deep pleasure, though a melancholy one, in the thought that his would lie amid the scenes which had suggested some of his most beautiful creations.

A glance at the engraving will give a better idea of the external appearance of "Otsego Hall," than any description which we could pen. There is something in the air of it



which carries you back to a very different period,—a quiet dignity, well suited to the "lordship of a Patent," and the calm grandeur of the primeval forest. The proportions are good, suggesting at first glance the idea of ample space, and convenient arrangement within. The architectural embellishments are rich, and would probably be thought too much so, if they were not in such perfect keeping, and if there were not something in the rich foliage and shrubbery around them, which would seem to leave no medium between a simple cottage or ornamental architecture. The following description from a much admired pen conveys so full and satisfactory an idea of this spot that we are unwilling to disfigure it by any garbling and rewriting of our own:

"Otsego Hall was built at the close of the last century by Judge Cooper. It is a brick building, the bricks having been made for the purpose at the outlet of the Lake. The floors were of original forest oak. It contains a large hall, according to the favorite mode of building at that day; the room is nearly fifty feet in length by twenty-four in width, and was occupied as the eating and sitting room of the family during the last generation. Mrs. Cooper, Judge Cooper's wife, was very partial to flowers,—a taste much less common fifty years ago than to-day; and nearly a third of the hall was filled with green-house plants at the time of her death, in 1817. The house received its name from Judge Cooper; but for a long time was more frequently called the "Mansion House" in the village. A double avenue of poplars reached formerly from the gate to the house, the trees having been given to Judge Cooper by Mr. Bingham, of Philadelphia, who first introduced them into America.

"On Mr. Cooper's return from Europe, the house passed into his possession, and he immediately began repairing it. For some years previous it had been uninhabited. The poplars, little suited to the climate, were all in a condition that required they should be cut down; and the whole character of the grounds was changed by winding walks and new plantations, Mr. Cooper setting out many of the trees with his own hands. The house was thoroughly repaired and improved, although the lower story remained much as it was built. Mr. Cooper was very partial to its doors and window shutters of the native oak of the country; entrances were also put up to protect the principal doors, which Mr. Cooper considered as necessary in our climate. The architectural designs of the changes were all drawn by Professor Morse, an intimate friend of Mr. Cooper, who was in Cooperstown at the time the work was going on. An old block-house, the only building standing on the spot when Judge Cooper came there, was found in the grounds now occupied by the Hall: a few of the older apple trees about the place are also older than the village. The graves of two deserters shot during Clinton's expedition, were found within the grounds of the Hall; and an old iron swivel was also dug up in digging the cellars of a house since burnt within the same bounds."

In this quiet retreat Cooper wrote seventeen new works of fiction, partly in completion of his original design, and some suggested by important questions of the day, in which he always took a lively interest, unbiassed by local or party passions. Here too, or rather while dividing his time between what he again called home and his two favorite cities, he wrote his "Naval History of the United States,"

the "Lives of Naval Commanders," two or three volumes upon government, and several pamphlets and reviews, upon subjects connected, for the most part, with naval history. His contest with the daily press subjected him to many petty annoyances, which would have worn sadly upon a mind less resolute or independent. But he came out of it triumphant, with new claims to the respect of those whose good opinion he coveted. In 1849 he made arrangements with Mr. Putnam for the republication of the "Leatherstocking Tales" and part of his sea novels, with new introductions and such corrections as he might wish to make, before giving them to the world in their last and permanent form.

Soon after, he began to feel some indications of disease. His feet became tender, and he was unable to use them as freely as he had been accustomed to do. He apologized to us one morning at Putnam's for not rising to shake hands. "My feet are so tender," said he, "that I do not like to stand any longer than I can help." Yet when we walked out together into Broadway, we could not help turning every now and then to admire his commanding figure and firm bearing. Sixty years seemed to sit as lightly on him as fifty on the shoulders of most men, and when we remembered the astonishing proofs which he had given of fertility and vigor, we could not but believe that he had many a new creation in store for us yet. But the end was drawing nigh. His last visit to New-York was in April of last year, and the change in his appearance was already such as to excite serious apprehensions among his friends. During the first few weeks after his return he seemed to be growing better, and wrote favorable accounts of himself to his friend

and medical adviser, Dr. Francis. But soon the disease returned in full force, rapidly gaining upon the vital organs, and terminating, at last, in dropsy. His death is yet too recent to make his last hours a fit subject for description. Dr. Francis has told all that can yet be told without trespassing too far on the sanctity of private feelings, and borne ample testimony to the beautiful example which he gave of resignation and faith. He died on the 14th of September, 1851, at half-past one in the afternoon. One day more, and he would have completed his sixty-second year.

Bryant has truly said that Cooper's failings were of that kind which are obvious to all the world. They were the failings of a strong, original, active mind, conscious of its powers, patient of observation and research, but accustomed, from early habit as well as natural tendencies, to self-reliance and independent judgment. His convictions were earnest, for they partook of the earnestness and sincerity of his nature, and he could no more conceal them from others than he could disguise them to himself. He was not an extensive reader, but he read thoughtfully, and his memory, though defective in quotations, was singularly tenacious of facts. His powers of observation were remarkable, and he naturally learned to place confidence in them. We have always fancied that power of observation was more or less modified by power of sight, and surely that keen, gray eye of his saw things with wonderful distinctness. Thus observation possessed a double charm for him. He loved it as the pleasant exertion of a power which nature had bestowed upon him in its highest perfection, and he loved it too, because, for every thing which lay within its scope, he could rely upon it.

In such minds the power of original observation is generally accompanied by the power of original thought. What they see for themselves, they judge for themselves, and with a promptness and vigor that are in exact proportion to the clearness and accuracy of their observations. In their intercourse with other men, they will express boldly what they have thought independently, and their earnest advocacy of their own opinions will often be interpreted into a haughty contempt for the opinions of others. Thus Cooper's originality was often called pride, and his independence overbearing. He was accused of conceit, because he claimed an accuracy for his own observations which he knew that they possessed, and taxed with obstinacy because he would not give up an opinion without a reason. But no man ever knew him well, who did not come to feel somewhat of the same kind of confidence in his observations which he placed in them himself, or conversed with him often without being convinced that every thing which could claim to be a reason would be listened to and examined with respectful consideration. If his convictions had been less earnest, or his mind less firm, we should still have had many a long year to wait for "Leather Stocking" and "Long Tom."

He was a firm believer in the right of property. He regarded it as an essential element of social organization, which every good citizen was bound to uphold. Three of his later works were written in fulfilment of what he regarded as his own duty in this question. He would admit of no denial of the principle, but when any violation of it that could be tolerated occurred on his own grounds, he could be lenient towards the offender, and even kind. One day

he caught a man stealing fruit from his garden. The case was so flagrant a one that he might have punished it severely. But instead of flying into a passion and sending for a constable, he reproved the culprit mildly, told him how great a wrong it was doing him to make his neighbors believe that there was no other way of getting at his fruit but by stealing it, and bidding him, the next time that he wanted any thing, come in at the gate like a true man and ask for it, helped him fill his basket and let him go.

His love of detail made him minutely exact in all his business transactions. He was always open and liberal in his bargains, but he loved to make them accurately, discuss them in all their bearings, and draw up the contract with his own hand and a business-like method which looked like any thing but romance. The fac-simile on the opposite page is a good specimen of this trait of his character, which, like all the other traits of a strong mind, pervaded his whole intellectual organization. It was constantly breaking out in his conversation. We remember to have heard him explain minutely to a foreigner who had just used voyage for passage, the difference between the two words. On another occasion, while he was writing the "Bravo," he stopped us one morning to inquire how far social usage admitted of substituting *signora* for *signorina* in addressing an unmarried lady. It was the natural habit of his mind, a conscientious exactness extending to every thing in which he engaged, and to which we owe the minute detail and patient elaboration which make his pictures so truthful.

He was a generous man in the best and truest sense of the word, liberal in the use of his money, but judicious and

discriminating in his liberality. Money he regarded as a means of gratifying his tastes, and he gratified them to the extent of his means, living in a style suited to his position and his means, indulging his love for society, his love of travel, his love for art and all those elegant pleasures which contribute so much to the healthful action of the mind. But he felt that it was also a responsibility, and one that could not be lightly thrown off. He was always ready to give, where the gift was a succor to want, not an encouragement to voluntary idleness. He loved, too, to encourage rising talent, particularly that of young artists. He gave them orders, opened his house to them, and cheerfully acknowledged their claims to his sympathy. Some of the instances of his ready sympathies, and the delicacy and good sense with which they were manifested, have occurred within our own knowledge, and will, we trust, one day be made known.

Some of the controversies in which he was engaged, have left, as controversies always do, false impressions of him upon many minds. He was earnest, and was therefore supposed to be bitter, and the sensitiveness which he was unwilling to acknowledge to himself or to others, often exposed him to ungrounded and even unwarrantable suspicions. A single example will be sufficient to show how far he rose above those vulgar and degrading passions which wilful prejudice has sometimes dared to attribute to him.

It is well known that the account which he has given of the battle of Lake Erie, in his "Naval History," involved him in a controversy with Lieutenant Mackenzie. In the height of the discussion, and just as he was carrying a severe examination of Mackenzie's version of the battle

through the press, the Somers returned from her ill-fated and memorable cruise. Cooper instantly suppressed his paper at the expense of a round sum to the printer. "The poor fellow," said he, "will have enough to do to escape the consequences of his own weakness. It is no time to press upon him now."

In conversation with Cooper, you could not fail to be struck with his fondness for realities. It seemed strange, at first, that a man who, for full half his career, had scarcely passed a day without writing two or three pages of fiction, should, in what appeared to be the habitual train of his thoughts, be so busy with the positive questions of life. He possessed one of those active minds which find rest in change of object, rather than in repose. He sought relief from invention in observation and discussion. He loved calm inquiry. He loved to think, and his thoughts have less of the ingenuity of the poet than of the clearness and justness of the man of the world. His opinions upon important questions of public policy and private duty, the definite rights of individuals, and the complex and comprehensive interests of nations, were the result of study and reflection, and he held to them firmly. He was firmly attached to the institutions of his country, not merely from habit and as a duty which his birth imposed upon him, but because he believed in them; and he believed in them, because reading, observation and reflection had taught him that they were better adapted than those of any other age or nation to promote the best interests of mankind. But he was painfully aware of our faults, which he laid bare with a boldness which posterity will admire, though his contempo-

raries repaid him for his frankness with calumny and neglect.

Cooper's literary habits were in many respects like Scott's. He never laid out a careful plan beforehand and worked up to it by regular progression. His first conception was an indefinite outline, relating rather to the general object than to the details. The characters once conceived, the incidents rose from them as their natural development. Alfieri tells us that all his tragedies were invented at the opera. Scott used to 'simmer' over his morning task in his dressing-room. Cooper was a great walker, and seldom failed, when alone, to be turning over the subject of a chapter in his mind so as to come to his task with something like definite preparation. But his imagination once excited, became strangely wilful in her flights, and the page that grew under his pen was often very unlike the mental sketch. He wrote rapidly, but corrected and altered with a care which seems almost incredible when we consider how much he has written. At one time he had set for himself a daily stent, but we are unable to say how long he adhered to it. In most cases his manuscript went to the compositor chapter by chapter as fast as it was written, and the work once fairly off his hands, he was glad to lose sight of it and pass to something new. In the early part of his career, he was in the habit of consulting his friends, but practice and success gave him confidence, and few we believe, if any of his later works, ever went beyond his family circle till they were actually published.

We would gladly go further, and speak of other qualities which are no less deserving of record, than those which we

have touched upon so cursorily. But we have already exceeded our limits, and this imperfect sketch must be brought to a close. Yet we cannot bid adieu to a subject on which we feel so deeply, without expressing the hope that this great man will soon recieve at the hands of his own countrymen the same reward which he has already received from foreigners. No productions of the American mind have been spread so extensively as the writings of Cooper. In every country of Europe you will find them side by side with its own favorite classics. In a volume fresh from the leading publishing house of Paris, we find the prospectus of a new edition of all his novels, with vignettes, and in the favorite form of fashionable typography, on the same sheet with the announcement of new editions of Béranger, Lamartine, Thierry, Thiers, and Scott. An eminent physician of our city was called the other day to attend some emigrants recently arrived from Germany. He was anxious to learn where they had got their knowledge of the country of their adoption. "We learnt it all from Cooper," was the reply. "We have four translations of his works in German, and we all read them." "Have you any thing new from Cooper?" "What is Cooper writing now?" are questions that have been asked us again and again in Italy, where his works are as well known as those of any native. And this, let it be remembered, is not the transient interest excited by a clever sketch of some new scene, which palls upon the taste the moment that the novelty has ceased, but a reputation sustained and confirmed by repeated trials in a period of unexampled literary fertility.

And where are the records of our gratitude for this

great work which he has done for us? Where are the busts and the statues which are to tell posterity what a noble form was once the tenement of that noble mind? The columns and the tablets, to point out to the pilgrim and the stranger, his favorite haunts and the scenes of his labors? At Florence, in the great square of the Cathedral, within the shadow of Giotto's tower, one of the first things to which your attention is directed, is a little slab of white marble with the simple inscription of 'Sasso di Dante.' There is nothing historically positive about it, but an old tradition says, that this was the place where Dante loved to come and gaze at the immortal dome of Brunelleschi, and repentant Florence, jealous of every record of the son whom she condemned to exile and the stake, put up this little tablet on the spot, to tell by what feet it had been hallowed.

And now that the grave has closed for the first time amongst us, over a man great in those things which make nations great forever, shall his dust mingle like common earth, with the unknown thousands who lived for themselves and are forgotten? Shall he thus pass from amongst us in the fulness of his maturity, and the year of his death bear no record in our annals? It cannot be that where wealth is lavished with eager competition in processions and pageants and vain displays, which fade from the memory with the last shout of the weary multitude, there should not be enough of manly pride to pay the debt of gratitude and justice. It cannot be that the wealth and liberality of New-York, should fail in this freshness of her expanding magnificence, to find some means of connecting the manifestations of her own power, with the memory of one of the best and

truest of her sons; or that men who look forward with trust, and labor with earnest hearts in the cause of their country, should forget that the surest pledge of the future, is the full and grateful recognition of the past.

In consideration of Hennessy Bollaert, to me in hand paid, or secured to be paid, I assign to George P. Putnam, the right to print and publish from my plates now in his possession, and for his sole benefit, Three Thousand copies of a work of fiction called the Spy, of which I am the author, and copy-right owner; engaging not to allow any other edition of said book to appear with my consent, with the exception of cheap editions drawn from the original plates, according to the terms of a previous dated contract between us, and on the following conditions, viz: —

Said Putnam is to sell the book in the market constantly, at a price not exceeding one dollar and a quarter at retail.

Said Putnam is to return the plates in good condition, wear and tear excepted, as soon as he has disposed of the Three Thousand copies, when his control over the book is altogether to cease; —

Said Putnam is to exclude in the Three Thousand copies mentioned, all the books already sold under an existing contract — Signed and sealed in the City of New York, Dec. 10th 1849.

J. Fenimore Cooper

Cooper. Draft of Agreement for 'the Spy'; new ed. 1849.

Edward Everett.



EVERETT.

THE town of Dorchester, in which Mr. Everett was born, is one of the oldest of the Puritan settlements in Massachusetts Bay. It took its name from Dorchester, in England, where lived John White, a Puritan divine, who has sometimes been called "the father of the Massachusetts colony" and "the patriarch of New England." The merchants who associated for trade in Massachusetts Bay in 1623 were of old Dorchester, and this town proved in the English rebellion to be one of the centres of opposition to

Charles the First. In his valuable paper on the origin of Massachusetts, Mr. Haven has shown how close was the connection always maintained between old Dorchester and the infant colony. Very naturally, the first settlers gave this familiar and honored name to one of their first and finest positions.

At the time of the siege of Boston Dorchester attained some revolutionary notoriety. The batteries thrown up by Washington, which drove the English fleet from the harbor in 1776, were established on Dorchester Heights. These hills are within the present line of the city of Boston.

We copy from a fine painting by Mr. H. Vautin, a representation of the house in Dorchester in which Mr. Edward Everett was born. This picture was painted a few years since, but the house is little changed in external appearance since 1794, the year of Mr. Everett's birth. It is now a hundred years old or more. It stands about a mile from the centre of the village of Dorchester, at a point long known as the "Five Corners." Here Mr. Everett's father lived from the year 1792, when he left the charge of the new South Church, in Boston, until his death in 1802.

We fear that no remarkable incidents can be related of the history of this comfortable country residence. It is now occupied by the Messrs. Richardson, who have owned it for many years. After the death of his father, Mr. Everett's mother, with her young family, removed to Boston, and at the public school of Boston and at Exeter Academy he was fitted for Harvard College. He also attended in Boston a private school kept by the late Hon. Ezekiel Webster, the brother of Hon. Daniel Webster.

He entered college in 1807, at which time he was but a few months more than thirteen years old. He left college in 1811 the youngest member of his class, but with the highest honors of the college. His distinguished brother Alexander, who graduated five years before, at the age of sixteen, was also the highest scholar in his class. Leaving the college halls which have been the homes of so many American authors, Mr. Everett in 1813 succeeded his friend Mr. Buckminster, the pastor of Brattle-street Church, in Boston. His home was then established in the parsonage belonging to that society.

In such a volume as this, it is not improper to say that this house, now venerable from a half-antiquity, although now surrounded by the noisiest business of the city, was appropriately situated for the purposes of a parsonage when Gov. Hancock presented it to Brattle-street Church. The business of the town has since swept all around it, perhaps unfortunately for its occupants; but, by the will of Gov. Hancock the parsonage is anchored and is likely to be, in that position. A house in which Mr. Buckminster, Mr. Everett, Dr. Palfrey and Mr. Lothrop have lived successively, deserves mention among the homes of American authors.

Mr. Everett left this residence when he accepted the Eliot professorship of Greek literature at Cambridge. He then spent some years in foreign travel. When he accepted the active duties of his professorship, he lived for some time in the Washington house or Craigie house, the present residence of Prof. Longfellow, which is described in another part of this volume. He afterwards occupied there a house

in the pretty avenue known by students as Professors' Row. This house was built by Prof. Farrar, and is now his home.

Mr. Everett entered Congress in 1824, and was for ten successive years the representative of the Middlesex district. During this time the residence of his family, and his own while he was not occupied at Washington, was at first Winter Hill, in Charlestown, now in Somerville, — a place also noted in the history of the siege of Boston. He afterwards removed to the more thickly settled part of Charlestown, in Bow-street.

Mr. Everett was chosen Governor of Massachusetts in 1835. He was elected to this post for four successive years. During this time he resided in Boston, in the house which he now occupies, or at Watertown, in the house well known in that vicinity as the home for many years of the late Dr. Marshall Spring.

In the autumn of the year 1839, — in the delicately balanced politics of Massachusetts, where then, as now, parties were very evenly divided, — and in a variety of local questions which it would be hard to explain in history or biography, Mr. Everett received one vote too few, out of more than a hundred thousand, and Gov. Morton was elected his successor. There is a good story told, of which we should hardly venture to give the particulars, of his describing this defeat the next year to a European Grand Duke, — who listened to the precise statistics with no little curiosity. Grand Dukes have had a chance since to learn the value of votes better than they knew them then. In the spring of 1840 Mr. Everett went to Europe with his family. He spent a winter in Florence; — and was engaged in a summer tour,

when he received his appointment as Minister to London from the administration of Gen. Harrison. He arrived in that city at the close of the year 1841, and remained there until he was recalled in the spring of 1845.

At this time the presidency of the University at Cambridge had just been vacated by Mr. Quincy's resignation. The friends of the University eagerly solicited Mr. Everett to become his successor. He accepted the invitation after some hesitation, and was formally inaugurated on the first of May, 1846. His administration of the University was short, but it is still gratefully remembered by those who were connected with it at that time. It inspirited and in some regards gave new tone to the venerable institution, — it certainly excited the enthusiasm of its friends, — and was signalized by some important enlargements of its endowments. The Lawrence Scientific School was endowed and established during these years. He was President of the University but three years, when the condition of his health, which was not equal to the harassing requisitions of its thousand duties of detail, compelled him to retire.

A pleasant essay might be written by some Cambridge man, on that old "President's House," which Mr. Everett occupied while President and for two or three years afterwards. It stands close on the high road, exposing its hospitable front to every blast of dust from roads dusty to a proverb. The anxious boy waiting Examination, or the gray-haired Alumnus revisiting Alma Mater, meet it first, as the eager omnibus-boy, unconscious of romance, delivers them at their destination. Magnificent in its day, it is, — though of old fashion and low ceiled rooms, — comfortable now. Its

hospitalities never failed in the presidential dynasties which can be remembered; and many a graduate and many a graduate's fairer friends, recollect the brilliancy of its lights of a Commencement evening, or as a "Class Day" celebration passed away; the pleasant little retiring places in its narrow grounds, and the spirited strains of evening music, from the performer hidden somewhere on such occasions in its shrubberies. And how faithfully remembered, — more distinctly, perhaps, than any of its rooms, — the wing in which was the President's "official residence!" Here he administered rebuke or praise; and here passed those critical interviews of which the apocryphal narrations make so large part of the food with which witty Sophomore regales the craving ears of wondering Freshman.

For the present, all these associations are of the past. Dr. Sparks occupies his own house at some little distance from the College halls, and the old President's home is a lodging-house and boarding-house for students.

It was built in 1726–'27. President Wadsworth,—whose name his descendant Prof. Longfellow bears, — was its first occupant. Holyoke, Locke, and Langdon, — in the dynasty of the last of whom the College buildings were made barracks for the Revolutionary troops, whose successors, the students, were hardly less revolutionary; for he retired from office when a body of impudent boys desired him to do so; — Willard, — who planted the large trees around the house, and who is remembered by living students, — Dr. Webber, Dr. Kirkland, Mr. Quincy and Mr. Everett have occupied it in succession. Here is our excuse for dwelling on its history among the Homes of American Authors.



Edward Everett.

Mr. Everett is again residing in his own house in Summer-street, in Boston. Many years since, this house was occupied by Hon. Daniel Webster. Mr. Everett has recently added to it the beautiful library of which our engraving represents one view. The bookcases, which almost wholly surround the room, are of carved oak. No glass doors hinder the student. A single cabinet protects manuscripts and other private documents. It is lighted from above, and above the books there is therefore an excellent light for some fine pictures. Among those which hang in the room are portraits of Hon. P. C. Brooks; of Webster by Healy and by Stuart; of Lord Brougham; of the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel; of Burke, and of John Quincy Adams. There are some curious antiquities and memorials of Mr. Everett's travels in the room; and between the doors is stretched, couchant, a beautiful marble hound, by Horatio Greenough, — the quiet guardian of the entrance.

The public career of Edward Everett, while it evidences the thoroughness of his culture and the versatility of his gifts, affords a remarkable illustration of the demands of an enlightened republic upon her intellectual citizens. Instead of proposing to himself a vocation accordant with his tastes, or an aim suggested by his peculiar ambition, the nobly endowed son of a free and progressive commonwealth, is led by the force of circumstances and the instinct of patriotism to dedicate his powers and acquisitions to every form of mental action and public service. The moment his ability is known it is appropriated in whatever sphere the exigencies of the time and community require. The utility of his know-

ledge, the weight of his character, his facility in affairs and grace of expression are claimed to vindicate, sustain or adorn the interests of his native land; and, instead of a life devotion to individual pursuits, he is consecrated to offices of great immediate value, with little or no regard to the claims of his personal genius. It is seldom indeed that the needful training, and the earnest will combine in any one man so favorably as to induce such a degree of excellence in these varied functions, as to reflect permanent honor on the individual. Such however is the case with Edward Everett. He has the rare merit of having proved himself fully equal to the numerous and diverse relations he has fulfilled. Other men of genius among us may be represented by the scene their writings have rendered famous; his career is more justly indicated by a view of his birthplace, which at once suggests a life of mental activity and patriotic devotion, and of the interior of the library where the best hours of an honored maturity are passed, eloquent of that wealth of attainment and literary culture, which has been the source both of his extensive usefulness and wide renown. His birthplace is one of the memorable villages near Boston, where may yet be seen the traces of dismantled fortifications, landmarks of the struggle for independence which nerved and elevated his ancestry, and prepared the way for those peaceful but hardly-won triumphs of the scholar, in which he has so largely shared. The son of a clergyman, his boyhood was familiar with the wholesome discipline and intellectual tone of an educated New England family; and at the early age of thirteen he entered College, and in 1811 graduated with every sign of the highest promise. At that

period, as before and subsequently, a peculiar local interest attached to the theological profession in Boston. An enthusiasm for eloquent and refined preaching obtained among the cultivated inhabitants. The Puritan morals and the respect for mental superiority which characterizes that community, together with the prevalence of a higher degree of literary taste, caused pulpit eloquence to be singularly appreciated. The list of Boston divines comprised the most honored names, and their social influence and position were remarkable. It is therefore not surprising that the friends of a new candidate for intellectual fame should urge him to adopt the ministerial vocation. In the case of Everett, however, a special motive for such a course existed. At the period when his talents and scholarship became known beyond the University, a voice upon whose faintest accent the most intelligent congregation of Boston had hung with breathless delight, was hushed for ever. Buckminster had closed a brief and beautiful life amid the tears of devoted parishioners; and the vacuum thus created, Everett, also young, gifted and without reproach, was urged to fill. Thus at the very outset were his abilities severely tested; and it is proof enough of his superior mind, that so hazardous an experiment succeeded.

During the first year of his youthful ministry, and while enlisting the sympathies of a large and critical audience by his sermons, he wrote and published an able work on the intrinsic scriptural evidences of Christianity. It was, however, obvious to the disinterested admirers of Everett that his true field of action lay in the domain of general literature; and that in promoting the interests of academic edu-

cation, his taste and love of knowledge would find more ample results than in any exclusive pursuit. Accordingly, in 1815, when he attained his majority, he was elected Professor of the Greek language and literature in Harvard University, with leave of absence to prosecute his studies and recruit his health in Europe. He reached Liverpool at the critical moment when the intelligence of Napoleon's flight from Elba had thrown the whole continent into agitation; and, therefore, lingered in England until the battle of Waterloo. Thence he proceeded to Gottingen, and having acquired the German language and made a tour of inquiry amid the seats of learning in that country, established himself, for a time, at Paris; and subsequently visited Scotland, Wales, different parts of France, Switzerland and Italy, and passed the winter of 1818 at Rome. In the spring of the following year he made the tour of Greece, thence went to Constantinople, and returned to Paris and London by the way of Vienna. On his arrival in the United States, after four and a half years of foreign travel and study, he commenced his duties as Greek professor — illustrating the language, history and antiquities, by an able and interesting course of lectures. As a contributor to the North American Review, which for some years was under his editorship, he became the most popular and effective exponent of American talent and culture which had appeared in the form of periodical literature. For ten years after relinquishing this genial and most useful department of labor, Mr. Everett was a member of the national House of Representatives. In 1835 he was elected Governor of Massachusetts, and held the office four successive years. In

1841 he was appointed Minister to England; and, when a change of administration induced his return home in 1846, he was chosen President of Harvard College. It is but a few years since he resigned that eminent office and took up his residence in Boston, where his time is divided between the literary avocations so accordant with his taste, and the pleasures of a cultivated society.

In the career thus outlined, we perceive all the elements desirable to give scope and inspiration to his rare gifts and systematic application. Each sphere in which he exerted his powers bore the fruits of genius, learning, and conscientious industry. Circumstances, too, were singularly propitious. With the solid though limited basis of New England morality and scholarship, and the impulse derived from a literary social atmosphere, he entered upon the broad field of German culture, prepared to adopt its best and evade its baneful agencies. On his first visit to Paris, the companionship of Coray, who had so eminently promoted the Greek cause with his pen, put Mr. Everett at once upon a track of inquiry and feeling, which he afterwards nobly vindicated. In Rome he was intimate with Canova, and there studied ancient by the light of modern art. To Ali Pacha he carried letters from Lord Byron; and no American scholar ever visited that classic region better prepared to realize its associations. The effect of these manifold advantages soon appeared. As a professor, while he unfolded the spirit of antiquity, he also prepared the most desirable manuals for the students; and advocated the cause of modern Greece, in the pages of his Review, with a knowledge of the subject and an enthusiasm for liberty which won the unlet-

tered while it fascinated the learned. In Congress, he united the most graceful oratory with a methodical and unwearied attention to the details of legislative business. As a foreign minister, the dignity and tact as well as varied acquisition he carried into the social circle, and his remarkable gift as an occasional speaker, gained for him universal respect and for his country peculiar honor. As a critic, the good-natured yet keen rebukes he administered to the superficial commentators on our habits and institutions, delighted thousands of readers and silenced the flippant horde of travellers with a torrent of graceful irony, supported by facts and arguments. As a man of letters, in every branch of public service and in society and private life, Mr. Everett has combined the useful with the ornamental, with a tact, a universality and a faithfulness almost unprecedented. At Windsor Castle we find him fluently conversing with each member of the diplomatic corps in their vernacular tongue; in Florence, addressing the Scientific Congress with characteristic grace and wisdom; in London, entertaining the most gifted and wisely chosen party of artists, authors and men of rank or state, in a manner which elicits their best social sentiments; at home, in the professor's chair, in the popular assembly, in the lyceum-hall, or to celebrate an historical occasion, — giving expression to high sentiment or memorable fact with the finished style and thrilling emphasis of the accomplished orator; and, in the intervals of these employments, we find him sometimes weaving into beautiful verse the impressions derived from his observation or reading, as witness the "Dirge of Alaric" and "Santa Croce."

It has been said that Mr. Everett owes it to himself and

his country to bequeath a memorial of his great acquisitions and brilliant endowments, more complete and individual than any which has yet appeared; and it has also been confidently asserted that a portion of his leisure is dedicated to such an object. The best actual record of his industry and genius, however, exists in the volumes of "Orations and Speeches" recently collected; and we trust the public expectation that his critical and historical essays are to be thus gathered up, revised and published, under his own eye, will not be disappointed. As an orator, however, he is chiefly recognized.

"If Webster is the Michael Angelo of American oratory, Everett is the Raphael. In the former's definition of eloquence, he recognizes its latent existence in the occasion as well as in the man, and in the subject; his own oratory is remarkable for grasping the bold and essential, for developing, as it were, the anatomical basis — the very sinews and nerves of his subject; while Everett instinctively catches and unfolds the grace of the occasion, whatever it be; in his mind the sense of beauty is vivid, and nothing is more surprising in his oratory, than the ease and facility with which he seizes upon the redeeming associations of every topic, however far removed it may be from the legitimate domain of taste or scholarship. In addressing a Mercantile Library Association, he places Commerce in so noble and captivating a light that the "weary honors of successful ambition," won by studious toil, grow dim in comparison to the wide relations, social influence, and princely munificence of the great merchant. He advocates the privileges, and describes the progress of Science, and the imagination ex-

pands in delightful visions of the ameliorating destinies of the world, and the infinite possibilities that crowd the path of undiscovered truth. He sets before an Association of Mechanics the relation of their pursuits to the welfare of man, and the importance of knowledge to the artisan, and their vocation rises at once to the highest dignity and promise. He enforces the natural charms and permanent utility of agriculture, and the Farmer's lot seems the most desirable of human occupations. The variety of occasions to which he has thus ably administered is the best proof of his fertile resources and adaptive power. He has successfully plead for Greece and Africa, for the prisoner and the intemperate, for art and literature, for popular and college education, for railroads and the militia, for the completion of the monument on Bunker Hill, and the restoration of York Minster, for manufactures, trade, the distribution of the Bible, and the cause of Ireland; and

> "'From the eddies of oblivion's stream,
> Propitious snatched each memorable theme.'

Equally impressive and graceful, while the intellectual crowd, at a New England academic festival, hang upon his familiar accents, and when responding to the welcome of a foreign city; and, crowned with the graces of true oratory, his eloquence is as unfaltering and appropriate when uttered to a royal society as to a delegation of Sacs and Foxes, and as readily attunes itself to the fading memory of the illiterate old soldier, as to the quick sympathies of the youthful scholar." *

* Tuckerman's "Characteristics of Literature."

And, Sir, when the revolutionary war was brought to a triumphant close, and the Colonies seemed unable, under the old confederation to recover from their exhaustion, what was it that induced those States, each proud & justly so, of its hardly earned independence, to abdicate some portion of their sovereignty at the call of patriotism, and consent to the establishment of a strong central government? Gentlemen, they well knew into whose hands it would first go, - and they knew that he would set up precedents of administration, which his successors would not lightly depart from. I am almost tempted to quote the sublime words of Milton -

"Far off his coming shone."

Edw. Everett. From Speech at a Public Dinner. New York, Feb. 22, 1852.

Ralph Waldo Emerson.



EMERSON.

THE village of Concord, Massachusetts, lies an hour's ride from Boston, upon the great Northern Railway. It is one of those quiet New England towns, whose few white houses, grouped upon the plain, make but a slight impression upon the mind of the busy traveller, hurrying to or from the city. As the conductor shouts "Concord!" the busy traveller has scarcely time to recall "Concord, Lexington and Bunker Hill," before the town has vanished and he is darting through woods and fields as solitary as those he

has just left in New Hampshire. Yet as it vanishes, he may chance to see two or three spires, and as they rush behind the trees his eyes fall upon a gleaming sheet of water. It is Walden Pond, — or Walden Water, as Orphic Alcott used to call it, — whose virgin seclusion was a just image of that of the little village, until one afternoon, some half dozen or more years since, a shriek sharper than any that had rung from Walden woods since the last war-whoop of the last Indians of Musketaquid, announced to astonished Concord, drowsing in the river meadows, that the nineteenth century had overtaken it. Yet long before the material force of the age bound the town to the rest of the world, the spiritual force of a single mind in it had attracted attention to it, and made its lonely plains as dear to many widely scattered minds as the groves of the academy or the vineyards of Vaucluse.

Except in causing the erection of the Railway buildings and several dwellings near it, steam has not much changed Concord. It is yet one of the quiet country towns whose charm is incredible to all but those who by loving it have found it worthy of love. The shire-town of the great agricultural county of Middlesex, it is not disturbed by the feverish throb of factories, nor by any roar of inexorable toil but the few puffs of the locomotive. One day, during the autumn, it is thronged with the neighboring farmers, who hold their high festival — the annual cattle-show — there. But the calm tenor of Concord life is not varied even on that day, by any thing more exciting than fat oxen, and the cud-chewing eloquence of the agricultural dinner. The population of the region is composed of sturdy, sterling men,

worthy representatives of the ancestors who sowed along the Concord shores, with their seed-corn and rye, the germs of a prodigious national greatness. At intervals every day the rattle, roar and whistle of the swift shuttle darting to and from the metropolitan heart of New England, weaving prosperity upon the land, remind those farmers in their silent fields, that the great world yet wags and wrestles. And the farmer-boy sweeping with flashing scythe through the river meadows, whose coarse grass glitters, apt for mowing, in the early June morning, pauses as the whistle dies into the distance, and wiping his brow and whetting his blade anew, questions the country-smitten citizen, the amateur Corydon struggling with imperfect stroke behind him, of the mystic romance of city life.

The sluggish repose of the little river images the farmer-boy's life. He bullies his oxen, and trembles at the locomotive. His wonder and fancy stretch toward the great world beyond the barn-yard and the village church, as the torpid stream tends toward the ocean. The river, in fact, seems the thread upon which all the beads of that rustic life are strung, — the clue to its tranquil character. If it were an impetuous stream, dashing along as if it claimed and required the career to which every American river is entitled, — a career it would have. Wheels, factories, shops, traders, factory-girls, boards of directors, dreary white lines of boarding-house, all the signs that indicate the spirit of the age, and of the American age, would arise upon its margin. Some shaven magician from State-street would run up by rail, and, from proposals, maps, schedules of stock, &c., educe a spacious factory as easily as Aladdin's palace arose from noth-

ing. Instead of a dreaming, pastoral poet of a village, Concord would be a rushing, whirling, bustling manufacturer of a town, like its thrifty neighbor Lowell. Many a fine equipage, flashing along city ways,—many an Elizabethan-Gothic-Grecian rural retreat, in which State-street woos Pan and grows Arcadian in summer, would be reduced, in the last analysis, to the Concord mills. Yet if these broad river meadows grew factories instead of corn, they might perhaps lack another harvest, of which the poet's thought is the sickle.

> "One harvest from your field
> Homeward brought the oxen strong,
> Another crop your acres yield,
> Which I gather in a song,"

sings Emerson, and again, as the afternoon light strikes pensive across his memory, as over the fields below him,—

> "Knows he who tills this lonely field,
> To reap its scanty corn,
> What mystic crops his acres yield,
> At midnight and at morn?"

The Concord river, upon whose winding shores the town has scattered its few houses, as if, loitering over the plain some fervent day, it had fallen asleep obedient to the slumberous spell, and had not since awakened, is a languid, shallow stream, that loiters through broad meadows, which fringe it with rushes and long grasses. Its sluggish current scarcely moves the autumn leaves showered upon it by a few maples that lean over the Assabeth — as one of its branches is named.

Yellow lily-buds and leathery lily-pads tesselate its surface, and the white water-lilies,—pale, proud Ladies of Shalott,—bare their virgin breasts to the sun in the seclusion of its distant reaches. Clustering vines of wild grape hang its wooded shores with a tapestry of the South and the Rhine. The pickerel-weed marks with blue spikes of flowers the points where small tributary brooks flow in, and along the dusky windings of those brooks, cardinal-flowers with a scarlet splendor paint the Tropics upon New England green. All summer long, from founts unknown, in the upper counties, from some anonymous pond or wooded hillside moist with springs, steals the gentle river through the plain, spreading at one point above the town into a little lake, called by the farmers "Fairhaven Bay," as if all its lesser names must share the sunny significance of Concord. Then, shrinking again, alarmed at its own boldness, it dreams on toward the Merrimac and the sea.

The absence of factories has already implied its shallowness and slowness. In truth it is a very slow river, belonging much more to the Indian than to the Yankee; so much so, indeed, that until within a very few years there was an annual visit to its shores from a few sad heirs of its old masters, who pitched a group of tents in the meadows and wove their tidy baskets and strung their beads in unsmiling silence. It was the same thing that I saw in Jerusalem among the Jews. Every Friday they repair to the remains of the old Temple wall, and pray and wail, kneeling upon the pavement and kissing the stones. But that passionate oriental regret was not more impressive than this silent homage of a waning race, who, as they beheld the unchanged river, knew

that, unlike it, the last drops of their existence were gradually flowing away, and that for their tribes there shall be no in-gathering.

So shallow is the stream that the amateur Corydons who embark at morning to explore its remoter shores, will, not infrequently in midsummer, find their boat as suddenly tranquil and motionless as the river, having placidly grounded upon its oozy bottom. Or, returning at evening, they may lean over the edge as they lie at length in the boat, and float with the almost imperceptible current, brushing the tips of the long water-grass and reeds below them in the stream — a river jungle, in which lurk pickerel and trouts — with the sensation of a bird drifting upon soft evening air over the treetops. No available or profitable craft navigate these waters, and animated gentlemen from the city who run up for "a mouthful of fresh air," cannot possibly detect the final cause of such a river. Yet the dreaming idler has a place on maps and a name in history.

Near the town it is crossed by three or four bridges. One is a massive structure to help the railroad over. The stern, strong pile readily betrays that it is part of good, solid stock, owned in the right quarter. Close by it is a little arched stone bridge, auxiliary to a great road leading to some vague region of the world called Acton upon guide-posts and on maps. Just beyond these bridges the river bends and forgets the railroad, but is grateful to the graceful arch of the little stone bridge for making its curve more picturesque, and, as it muses toward the Old Manse, listlessly brushing the lilies, it wonders if Ellery Channing, who lives beyond, upon a hillside sloping to the shore, wrote his poem

of The Bridge to that particular one. There are two or three wooden bridges also, always combining well with the landscape, always making and suggesting pictures.

The Concord, as I said, has a name in history. Near one of the wooden bridges you turn aside from the main road, close by the "Old Manse," — whose mosses of mystic hue were gathered by Hawthorne, who lived there for three years, — and a few steps bring you to the river, and to a small monument upon its brink. It is a narrow, grassy way; not a field nor a meadow, but of that shape and character which would perplex the animated stranger from the city, who would see, also, its unfitness for a building-lot. The narrow, grassy way is the old road, which in the month of April, 1775, led to a bridge that crossed the stream at this spot. And upon the river's margin, upon the bridge and the shore beyond, took place the sharp struggle between the Middlesex farmers and the scarlet British soldiers, known in tradition as "Concord fight." The small monument records the day and the event. When it was erected, Emerson wrote the following hymn for the ceremony:

April 19, 1836.

"By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

"The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream that seaward creeps.

"On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We see to-day a votive stone,
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

"Spirit that made these heroes dare
To die, or leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and Thee."

Close under the rough stone wall at the left, which separates it from the little grassy orchard of the Manse, is a small mound of turf and a broken stone. Grave and headstone shrink from sight amid the grass and under the wall, but they mark the earthly bed of the first victims of that first fight. A few large trees overhang the ground, which Hawthorne thinks have been planted since that day, and he says that in the river he has seen mossy timbers of the old bridge, and on the farther bank, half-hidden, the crumbling stone abutments that supported it. In an old house upon the mainroad, nearly opposite the entrance to this grassy way, I knew a hale old woman who well remembered the gay advance of the flashing soldiers, the terrible ring and crack of firearms, and the panic-stricken retreat of the regulars, blackened and bloody. But the placid river has long since overborne it all. The alarm, the struggle, the retreat, are swallowed up in its supreme tranquillity. The summers of more than seventy years have obliterated every trace of the road with thick grass, which seeks to bury the graves, as earth buried the victims. Let the sweet ministry of Summer avail. Let its mild iteration even sap the monu-

ment and conceal its stones as it hides the abutment in foliage; for, still on the sunny slopes, white with the May blossoming of apple-orchards, and in the broad fields, golden to the marge of the river, and tilled in security and peace, survives the imperishable remembrance of that day and its results.

The river is thus the main feature of the Concord landscape. It is surrounded by a wide plain, from which rise only three or four low hills. One is a wooded cliff over Fairhaven Bay, a mile from the town; one separates the main river from the Assabeth; and just beyond the battle ground one rises, rich with orchards, to a fine wood which crowns it. The river meadows blend with broad, lonely fields. A wide horizon, like that of the prairie or the sea, is the grand charm of Concord. At night the stars are seen from the roads crossing the plain, as from a ship at sea. The landscape would be called tame by those who think no scenery grand but that of mountains or the sea-coast. But the wide solitude of that region is not so accounted by those who live there. To them it is rich and suggestive, as Emerson shows, by saying in the essay upon "Nature," "My house stands in low land, with limited outlook, and on the skirt of the village. But I go with my friend to the shore of our little river, and with one stroke of the paddle I leave the village politics and personalities, yes, and the world of villages and personalities behind, and pass into a delicate realm of sunset and moonlight, too bright almost for spotted man to enter without novitiate and probation. We penetrate bodily this incredible beauty; we dip our hands in this painted element; our eyes are bathed in these lights

and forms. A holiday, a villesgiatura, a royal revel, the proudest, most heart-rejoicing festival that valor and beauty, power and taste ever decked and enjoyed, establishes itself upon the instant." And again, as indicating where the true charm of scenery lies, — "In every landscape the point of astonishment is the meeting of the sky and the earth, and that is seen from the first hillock, as well as from the top of the Alleghanies. The stars stoop down over the brownest, homeliest common, with all the spiritual magnificence which they shed on the Campagna or on the marble deserts of Egypt." He is speaking here, of course, of the spiritual excitement of Beauty, which crops up every where in Nature, like gold in a rich region; but the quality of the imagery indicates the character of the scenery in which the essay was written.

Concord is too far from Boston to rival in garden cultivation its neighbors, West Cambridge, Lexington and Waltham; nor can it boast, with Brookline, Dorchester and Cambridge, the handsome summer homes of city wealth. But it surpasses them all, perhaps, in a genuine country freshness and feeling, derived from its loneliness. If not touched by city elegance, niether is it infected by city meretriciousness — it is sweet, wholesome country. By climbing one of the hills, your eye sweeps a wide, wide landscape, until it rests upon graceful Wachuset, or, farther and mistier, Monadnoc, the lofty outpost of New Hampshire hills. Level scenery is not tame. The ocean, the prairie, the desert, are not tame, although of monotonous surface. The gentle undulations which mark certain scenes, — a rippling landscape, in which all sense of space, of breadth and of

height is lost,—that is tame. It may be made beautiful by exquisite cultivation, as it often is in England and on parts of the Hudson shores, but it is, at best, rather pleasing than inspiring. For a permanent view the eye craves large and simple forms, as the body requires plain food for its best nourishment.

The town of Concord is built mainly upon one side of the river. In its centre is a large open square, shaded by fine elms. A white wooden church, in the most classical style of Yankee-Greek, stands upon the square. The Court House is upon one of the corners. In the old Court House, in the days when I knew Concord, many conventions were held for humane as well as merely political objects. One summer day I especially remember, when I did not envy Athens its forum, for Emerson and William Henry Channing spoke. In the speech of both burned the sacred fire of eloquence, but in Emerson it was light, and in Channing heat.

From this square diverge four roads, like highways from a forum. One leads by the Court House and under stately sycamores to the Old Manse and the battle-ground, another goes directly to the river, and a third is the main avenue of the town. After passing the shops this third divides, and one branch forms a fair and noble street, spacious and loftily arched with elms, the houses standing liberally apart, each with its garden-plot in front. The fourth avenue is the old Boston road, also dividing, at the edge of the village, into the direct route to the metropolis and the Lexington turnpike.

The house of Mr. Emerson stands opposite this junction.

It is a plain, square, white dwelling-house, yet it has a city air, and could not be mistaken for a farmhouse. A quiet merchant, you would say, unostentatious and simple, has here hidden himself from town. But a thick grove of pine and fir-trees, almost brushing the two windows upon the right of the door, and occupying the space between them and the road, suggests at least a peculiar taste in the retired merchant, or hints the possibility that he may have sold his place to a Poet or Philosopher, — or to some old East India sea-captain, perhaps, who cannot sleep without the sound of waves, and so plants pines to rustle, surf-like, against his chamber-window.

The fact, strangely enough, partly supports your theory. In the year 1828 Charles Coolidge, a brother of J. Templeman Coolidge, a merchant of repute in Boston, and grandson of Joseph Coolidge, a patriarchal denizen of Bowdoin Square in that city, came to Concord and built this house. Gratefully remembering the lofty horse-chestnuts which shaded the city square, and which, perhaps, first inspired him with the wish to be a nearer neighbor of woods and fields, he planted a row of them along his lot, which this year ripen their twenty-fifth harvest. With the liberal hospitality of a New England merchant, he did not forget the spacious cellars of the city, and, as Mr. Emerson writes, "he built the only good cellar that had then been built in Concord."

Mr. Emerson bought the house in the year 1835. He found it a plain, convenient, and thoroughly-built country residence. An amiable neighbor of Mr. Coolidge had placed a miserable old barn irregularly upon the edge of that gentleman's lot, which, for the sake of comeliness, he was forced



to buy and set straight and smooth into a decent dependence of the mansion-house. The estate, upon passing into Mr. Emerson's hands, comprised the house, barn, and two acres of land. He has enlarged house and barn, and the two acres have grown to nine. Our author is no farmer, except as every country gentleman is, yet the kindly slope from the rear of the house to a little brook, which, passing to the calm Concord beyond, washes the edge of his land, yields him at least occasional beans and peas, — or some friend, agriculturally enthusiastic, and an original Brook Farmer, experiments with guano in the garden, and produces melons and other vines with a success that relieves Brook Farm from every slur of inadequate practical genius. Mr. Emerson has shaded his originally bare land with trees, and counts near a hundred apple and pear trees in his orchard. The whole estate is quite level, inclining only toward the little brook, and is well watered and convenient.

The Orphic Alcott, — or Plato Skimpole, as Aspasia called him, — well known in the transcendental history of New England, designed and with his own hands erected a summer-house, which gracefully adorns the lawn, if I may so call the smooth grass-plot at the side of the house. Unhappily, this edifice promises no long duration, not being "technically based and pointed." This is not a strange, although a disagreeable fact, to Mr. Emerson, who has been always the most faithful and appreciating of the lovers of Mr. Alcott. It is natural that the Orphic Alcott should build graceful summer-houses. There are even people who declare that he has covered the pleasant but somewhat misty lawns of ethical speculation with a thousand such

edifices, which need only to be a little more "technically based and pointed" to be quite perfect. At present, they whisper, the wind blows clean through them, and no figures of flesh and blood are ever seen there, but only pallid phantoms with large, calm eyes, eating uncooked grain out of baskets, and discoursing in a sublime shibboleth of which mortals have no key. But how could Plato Skimpole, who goes down to Hingham on the sea, in a New England January, clad only in a suit of linen, hope to build immortal summer-houses?

Mr. Emerson's Library is the room at the right of the door upon entering the house. It is a simple square room, not walled with books like the den of a literary grub, nor merely elegant like the ornamental retreat of a dilettante. The books are arranged upon plain shelves, not in architectural bookcases, and the room is hung with a few choice engravings of the greatest men. There was a fair copy of Michael Angelo's "Fates," which, properly enough, imparted that grave serenity to the ornament of the room which is always apparent in what is written there. It is the study of a scholar. All our author's published writings, the essays, orations, and poems, date from this room, as much as they date from any place or moment. The villagers, indeed, fancy their philosophical contemporary affected by the novelist James's constancy of composition. They relate, with wide eyes, that he has a huge manuscript book, in which he incessantly records the ends of thoughts, bits of observation and experience, and facts of all kinds, — a kind of intellectual and scientific rag-bag, into which all shreds and remnants of conversations and reminiscences of wayside reveries

are incontinently thrust. This work goes on, they aver, day and night, and when he travels the rag-bag travels too, and grows more plethoric with each mile of the journey. And a story, which will one day be a tradition, is perpetuated in the village, that one night, before his wife had become completely accustomed to his habits, she awoke suddenly, and hearing him groping about the room, inquired anxiously,—

"My dear, are you unwell?"

"No, my love, only an idea."

The Library is not only the study of a scholar, it is the bower of a poet. The pines lean against the windows, and to the student deeply sunk in learned lore, or soaring upon the daring speculations of an intrepid philosophy, they whisper a secret beyond that of the philosopher's stone, and sing of the springs of poetry.

The site of the house is not memorable. There is no reasonable ground to suppose that so much as an Indian wigwam ever occupied the spot; nor has Henry Thoreau, a very faithful friend of Mr. Emerson's, and of the woods and waters of his native Concord, ever found an Indian arrow-head upon the premises. Henry Thoreau's instinct is as sure toward the facts of nature as the witch-hazel toward treasure. If every quiet country town in New England had a son, who, with a lore like Selborne's, and an eye like Buffon's, had watched and studied its landscape and history, and then published the result, as Thoreau has done, in a book as redolent of genuine and perceptive sympathy with nature, as a clover-field of honey, New England would seem as poetic and beautiful as Greece. Thoreau lives in the berry-pastures upon a bank over Walden pond, and in a little house

of his own building. One pleasant summer afternoon a small party of us helped him raise it — a bit of life as Arcadian as any at Brook Farm. Elsewhere in the village he turns up arrowheads abundantly, and Hawthorne mentions that Thoreau initiated him into the mystery of finding them. But neither the Indians, nor Nature, nor Thoreau can invest the quiet residence of our author with the dignity, or even the suspicion of a legend. History stops short in that direction with Charles Coolidge, Esq., and the year 1828.

There is little prospect from the house. Directly opposite a low bluff overhangs the Boston road and obstructs the view. Upon the other sides the level land stretches away. Toward Lexington it is a broad, half-marshy region, and between the brook behind and the river, good farms lie upon the outskirts of the town. Pilgrims drawn to Concord by the desire of conversing with the man, whose written or spoken eloquence has so profoundly charmed them, and who have placed him in some pavilion of fancy, some peculiar residence, find him in no porch of philosophy nor academic grove, but in a plain white house by the wayside, ready to entertain every comer as an ambassador from some remote Cathay of speculation whence the stars are more nearly seen. But the familiar reader of our author will not be surprised to find the "walking eye-ball" simply sheltered, and the "endless experimenter with no past at my back," housed without ornament. Such a reader will have felt the Spartan severity of this intellect, and have noticed that the realm of this imagination is rather sculpturesque than pictorial, more Greek than Italian. Therefore he will be pleased to alight at the little gate, and hear the

breezy welcome of the pines, and the no less cordial salutation of their owner. For if the visitor knows what he is about, he has come to this plain for bracing, mountain air. These serious Concord reaches are no vale of Cashmere. Where Plato Skimpole is architect of the summer-house, you may imagine what is to be expected in the mansion itself. It is always morning within those doors. If you have nothing to say,—if you are really not an envoy from some kingdom or colony of thought, and cannot cast a gem upon the heaped pile, you had better pass by upon the other side. For it is the peculiarity of Emerson's mind to be always on the alert. He eats no lotus, but for ever quaffs the waters which engender immortal thirst.

If the memorabilia of his house could find their proper Xenophon, the want of antecedent arrowheads upon the premises would not prove very disastrous to the interest of the history. The fame of the philosopher attracts admiring friends and enthusiasts from every quarter, and the scholarly grace and urbane hospitality of the gentleman send them charmed away. Friendly foes, who altogether differ from Emerson, come to break a lance with him upon the level pastures of Concord, with all the cheerful and appreciative zeal of those who longed

> "To drink delight of battle with their peers
> Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy."

It is not hazardous to say that the greatest questions of our day and of all days, have been nowhere more amply discussed, with more poetic insight or profound conviction, than in the comely, square white house upon the edge of

the Lexington turnpike. There have even been attempts at something more formal and club-like than the chance conversations of occasional guests, one of which will certainly be nowhere recorded but upon these pages.

It was in the year 1845 that a circle of persons of various ages, and differing very much in every thing but sympathy, found themselves in Concord. Toward the end of the autumn Mr. Emerson suggested that they should meet every Monday evening through the winter in his Library. "Monsieur Aubepine," "Miles Coverdale," and other phantoms, since generally known as Nathaniel Hawthorne, who then occupied the Old Manse—the inflexible Henry Thoreau, a scholastic and pastoral Orson, then living among the blackberry pastures of Walden pond—Plato Skimpole, then sublimely meditating impossible summer-houses in a little house upon the Boston road—the enthusiastic agriculturist and Brook Farmer already mentioned, then an inmate of Mr. Emerson's house, who added the genial cultivation of a scholar to the amenities of the natural gentleman—a sturdy farmer neighbor, who had bravely fought his weary way through inherited embarrassments to the small success of a New England husbandman, and whose faithful wife had seven times merited well of her country—two city youths, ready for the fragments from the feast of wit and wisdom—and the host himself, composed this Club. Ellery Channing, who had that winter harnessed his Pegasus to the New-York Tribune, was a kind of corresponding member. The news of this world was to be transmitted through his eminently practical genius, as the Club deemed itself competent to take charge of tidings from all other spheres.

I went, the first Monday evening, very much as Ixion may have gone to his banquet. The philosophers sat dignified and erect. There was a constrained, but very amiable silence, which had the impertinence of a tacit inquiry, seeming to ask, "Who will now proceed to say the finest thing that has ever been said?" It was quite involuntary and unavoidable, for the members lacked that fluent social genius without which a Club is impossible. It was a Congress of oracles on the one hand, and of curious listeners upon the other. I vaguely remember that the Orphic Alcott invaded the Sahara of silence with a solemn "saying," to which, after due pause, the honorable member for blackberry pastures responded by some keen and graphic observation, while the Olympian host, anxious that so much good material should be spun into something, beamed smiling encouragement upon all parties. But the conversation became more and more staccato. Miles Coverdale, a statue of night and silence, sat, a little removed, under a portrait of Dante, gazing imperturbably upon the group; and as he sat in the shadow, his dark hair and eyes and suit of sables made him, in that society, the black thread of mystery which he weaves into his stories, while the shifting presence of the Brook Farmer played like heat-lightning around the room.

I recall little else but a grave eating of russet apples by the erect philosophers, and a solemn disappearance into night. The Club struggled through three Monday evenings. Plato was perpetually putting apples of gold in pictures of silver; for such was the rich ore of his thoughts, coined by the deep melody of his voice. Orson charmed us with the secrets won from his interviews with Pan in the Walden

woods—while Emerson, with the zeal of an engineer trying to dam wild waters, sought to bind the wide-flying embroidery of discourse into a web of clear sweet sense. But still in vain. The oracular sayings were the unalloyed saccharine element; and every chemist knows how much else goes to practical food—how much coarse, rough, woody fibre is essential. The Club struggled on valiantly, discoursing celestially, eating apples, and disappearing in the dark, until the third evening it vanished altogether. But I have since known clubs of fifty times that number, whose collective genius was not more than that of either one of the Dii Majores of our Concord coterie. The fault was its too great concentration. It was not relaxation, as a club should be, but tension. Society is a play, a game, a tournament; not a battle. It is the easy grace of undress; not an intellectual, full-dress parade.

I have already hinted this unbending intellectual alacrity of our author. His sport is serious—his humor is earnest. He stands like a sentinel. His look, and manner, and habit of thought cry "Who goes there?" and if he does not hear the countersign, he brings the intruder to a halt. It is for this surprising fidelity and integrity that his influence has been so deep, and sure, and permanent, upon the intellectual life of the young men of New England; and of Old England, too, where in Manchester there were regular weekly meetings at which his works were read. What he said long ago in his preface to the American edition of Carlyle's Miscellanies, that they were papers which had spoken to the young men of the time "with an emphasis that hindered them from sleep," is strikingly true of his own writings.

His first slim, anonymous duodecimo, "Nature," was as fair and fascinating to the royal young minds who met it in the course of their reading, as Egeria to Numa wandering in the grove. The essays, orations, and poems followed, developing and elaborating the same spiritual and heroic philosophy, applying it to life, history, and literature, with a vigor and richness so supreme, that not only do many account him our truest philosopher, but others acknowledge him as our most characteristic poet.

It would be a curious inquiry how much and what kind of influence the placid scenery of Concord has exercised upon his mind. "I chide society, I embrace solitude," he says; "and yet I am not so ungrateful as not to see the wise, the lovely, and the noble-minded, as from time to time they pass my gate." It is not difficult to understand his fondness for the spot. He has been always familiar with it, always more or less a resident of the village. Born in Boston upon the spot where the Chauncey Place Church now stands, part of his youth was passed in the Old Manse, which was built by his grandfather and in which his father was born; and there he wrote "Nature." From the magnificent admiration of ancestral England, he was glad to return two years since to quiet Concord, and to acres which will not yield a single arrowhead. The Swiss sigh for their mountains; but the Nubians, also, pine for their desert plains. Those who are born by the sea long annually to return, and to rest their eyes upon its living horizon. Is it because the earliest impressions made when the mind is most plastic, are most durable? or because youth is that golden age bounding the confines of memory, and

floating for ever, an alluring mirage, as we recede farther from it?

The imagination of the man who roams the solitary pastures of Concord, or floats, dreaming, down its river, will easily see its landscape upon Emerson's pages. "That country is fairest," he says, "which is inhabited by the noblest minds." And although that idler upon the river may have leaned over the Mediterranean from Genoese and Neapolitan villas—or have glanced down the steep, green valley of Sicilian Enna, seeking "herself the fairest flower," or walked the shores where Cleopatra and Helen walked—yet the charm of a landscape which is felt, rather than seen, will be imperishable. "Travelling is a Fool's Paradise," says Emerson. But he passed its gates to learn that lesson. His writings, however, have no imported air. If there be something oriental in his philosophy and tropical in his imagination, they have yet the strong flavor of his Mother Earth—the underived sweetness of the open Concord sky, and the spacious breadth of the Concord horizon.

They say

that by electro magnetism vegetation

may be so accelerated, that your

salad shall be grown whilst your

fowl is roasting for dinner. It is

a symbol of our modern life, the Con-

densation & acceleration of Objects.

But nothing is gained, nature cannot

be cheated. Man's life is but seventy

salads long, grow they swift or grow

they slow.

Emerson from "Method of Nature."

William Gilmore Simms.



SIMMS.

THE country residence of William Gilmore Simms is on the plantation of his father-in-law, Mr. Roach, in Barnwell District, South Carolina, near Midway, a railway station, at just half the distance between Charleston and Augusta. Here he passes half the year, the most agreeable half in that climate,—its pleasant winter, and portions of its spring and autumn—in a thinly settled country divided into large plantations, principally yielding cotton, with smaller fields of maize, sweet potatoes, pea-nuts, and other productions of the region, to which the sugar-cane has lately been added.

Forests of oak, and of the majestic long-leaved pine, surround the dwelling, interspersed with broad openings, and stretch far away on all sides. In the edge of one of them are the habitations of the negroes by whom the plantation is cultivated, who are indulgently treated and lead an easy life. The bridle-roads through these noble forests, over the hard white sand from which rise the lofty stems of the pines, are very beautiful. Sometimes they

wind by the borders of swamps, green in midwinter with the holly, the red bay, and other trees that wear their leaves throughout the year, among which the yellow jessamine twines itself and forms dense arbors, perfuming the air in March to a great distance with the delicate odor of its blossoms. In the midst of these swamps rises the tall Virginia cypress, with its roots in the dark water, the summer haunt of the alligator, who sleeps away the winter in holes made under the bank. Mr. Simms, both in his poetry and prose, has made large and striking use of the imagery supplied by the peculiar scenery of this region.

The house is a spacious country dwelling, without any pretensions to architectural elegance, comfortable for the climate, though built without that attention to what a South Carolinian would call the unwholesome exclusion of the outer air which is thought necessary in these colder latitudes. Around it are scattered a number of smaller buildings of brick, and a little further stand rows and clumps of evergreens—the water-oak, with its glistening light-colored foliage, the live-oak, with darker leaves, and the Carolina bird-cherry, one of the most beautiful trees of the South, blooming before the winter is past, and murmuring with multitudes of bees. In one of the lower rooms of this dwelling, in the midst of a well chosen library, many of the works which comprise the numerous catalogue of Mr. Simms's works were written.

Mr. Simms was born April 17, 1806, in the State of South Carolina. It was at first intended that he should study medicine, but his inclinations having led him to the law, he devoted himself to the study of that profession. His literary

habits are very uniform. His working hours usually commence in the morning, and last till two or three in the afternoon, after which he indulges in out-door recreations, in reading, or society. If friends or visitors break into his hours of morning labor, which he does not often permit, he usually redeems the lost time at night, after the guests have retired. He is a late sitter, and consequently a late riser. Landscape gardening is one of his favorite pastimes, and the grounds adjoining his residence afford agreeable evidence of his good taste.

Mr. Simms is a man of athletic make, a full muscular development, and a fresh complexion, tokens of vigorous health, which however is not without its interruptions, owing, I doubt not, to his studious and sedentary habits; for although not indisposed to physical exertion, the inclination to mental activity in the form of literary occupation, predominates with him over every other taste and pursuit. His manners, like the expression of his countenance, are singularly frank and ingenuous, his temper generous and sincere, his domestic affections strong, his friendships faithful and lasting, and his life blameless. No man ever wore his character more in the general sight of men than he, or had ever less occasion to do otherwise. The activity of mind of which I have spoken, is as apparent in his conversation as in his writings. He is fond of discussion, likes to pursue an argument to its final retreat, and is not unwilling to complete a disquisition which others, in their ordinary discourse, would leave in outline. He has travelled extensively in the South and Southwest, mingling freely with all classes, and has accumulated an apparently exhaustless fund of anecdotes and incidents, illus

trative of life and manners. These he relates, with great zest and inimitable humor, reproducing to perfection the peculiar dialect and tones of the various characters introduced, whether sand-lapper, backwoodsman, half-breed, or negro.

His literary character has this peculiarity, which I may call remarkable, that writing as he does with very great rapidity, and paying little regard to the objections brought by others against what he writes, he has gone on improving upon himself. His first attempts in poetry were crude and jejune. As he proceeded, he left them immeasurably behind, in command of materials and power of execution, till in his beautiful poem of Atalantis, the finest, I think, he has written, his faculties seem to have nearly reached their maturity in this department. One of his pieces, entitled "The Edge of the Swamp," may be quoted here not only as a specimen of his descriptive verse, but as an illustration of the peculiar source from which his imagery is derived: —

"'Tis a wild spot and hath a gloomy look;
The bird sings never merrily in the trees,
And the young leaves seem blighted. A rank growth
Spreads poisonously round, with power to taint,
With blistering dews, the thoughtless hand that dares
To penetrate the covert. Cypresses
Crowd on the dank, wet earth; and, stretched at length,
The cayman — a fit dweller in such home —
Slumbers, half buried in the sedgy grass,
Beside the green ooze where he shelters him.
A whooping crane erects his skeleton form,
And shrieks in flight. Two summer ducks aroused
To apprehension, as they hear his cry,
Dash up from the lagoon, with marvellous haste,

Following his guidance. Meetly taught by these,
And startled at our rapid, near approach,
The steel-jawed monster, from his grassy bed,
Crawls slowly to his slimy, green abode,
Which straight receives him. You behold him now,
His ridgy back uprising as he speeds,
In silence, to the centre of the stream,
Whence his head peers alone. A butterfly
That, travelling all the day, has counted climes
Only by flowers, to rest himself awhile,
Lights on the monster's brow. The surly mute
Straightway goes down, so suddenly, that he,
The dandy of the summer flowers and woods,
Dips his light wings, and spoils his golden coat,
With the rank water of that turbid pond,
Wondering and vexed, the plumed citizen
Flies, with an hurried effort, to the shore,
Seeking his kindred flowers: — but seeks in vain —
Nothing of genial growth may there be seen,
Nothing of beautiful! Wild, ragged trees,
That look like felon spectres, — fetid shrubs,
That taint the gloomy atmosphere — dusk shades,
That gather, half a cloud, and half a fiend
In aspect, lurking on the swamp's wild edge, —
Gloom with their sternness and forbidding frowns
The general prospect. The sad butterfly,
Waving his lackered wings, darts quickly on,
And, by his free flight, counsels us to speed,
For better lodgings, and a scene more sweet,
Than these drear borders offer us to-night.

His prose writings show a similar process of gradual improvement, though in them the change is less marked, owing to his having appeared before the public as a novelist at a riper period of his literary life. In all that he has written

his excellencies are unborrowed; their merits are the development of original native germs, without any apparent aid from models. His thoughts, his diction, his arrangement, are his own; he reminds you of no other author; even in the lesser graces of literary execution, he combines language after no pattern set by other authors, however beautiful.

His novels have had a wide circulation, and are admired for the rapidity and fervor of the narrative, their picturesque descriptions, the energy with which they express the stronger emotions, and the force with which they portray local manners. His critical writings, which have appeared in the Southern periodicals and are quite numerous, are less known. They often, no doubt, have in them those imperfections which belong to rapid composition, but I must be allowed to single out from among them one example of great excellence, his analysis and estimate of the literary character of Cooper, a critical essay of great depth and discrimination, to which I am not sure that any thing hitherto written on the same subject is fully equal. He published his "Lyrics" in 1825, eighteen years ago; his longest and best poem, "Atalantis, a Story of the Sea," in 1832; "Martin Faber," "Guy Rivers," "Yemasee," "Partisan," "Mellichampe," and many others, in succession. The entire series of his works, poetry and prose, comprises about fifty volumes.

"Exactly." That's the very word. There is a nature in this and it is to feed this nature, and to work upon it in a mysterious way, that God appointed the birds to build their nests in the trees that surround a man's dwelling. Now, you know that it is a fact, however curious, that singing birds never harbour in uninhabited regions. In our great forests you never hear the birds. The smaller birds all perish from the larger ones. They shelter themselves in places which are inhabited, in order to be safe. And they reward man for his protection by their songs, and by the destruction of insects. Now, Hillhouse, Dennison is one of my song birds. He sings for me when I am sad. He makes music for me which I love

Henry W. Longfellow.



LONGFELLOW.

"Once, ah, once, within these walls,
One whom memory oft recalls,
The Father of his Country dwelt;
And yonder meadow, broad and damp,
The fires of the besieging camp
Encircled with a burning belt,
Up and down these echoing stairs,
Heavy with the weight of cares,
Sounded his majestic tread;
Yes, within this very room
Sat he in those hours of gloom,
Weary both in heart and head."

ONE calm afternoon in the summer of 1837 a young man passed down the elm-shaded walk that separated the old Cragie house, in Cambridge, from the high road. Reaching

the door, he paused to observe the huge, old-fashioned brass knocker, and the quaint handle, — relics, evidently, of an epoch of colonial state. To his mind, however, the house and these signs of its age, were not interesting from the romance of antiquity alone, but from their association with the early days of our revolution, when General Washington, after the battle of Bunker Hill, had his headquarters in the mansion. Had his hand, perhaps, lifted this same latch, lingering as he clasped it in the whirl of a myriad emotions? Had he, too, paused in the calm summer afternoon, and watched the silver gleam of the broad river in the meadows — the dreamy blue of the Milton hills beyond? And had the tranquillity of that landscape penetrated his heart with "the sleep that is among the hills," and whose fairest dream to him was a hope now realized in the peaceful prosperity of his country?

At least the young man knew that if the details of the mansion had been somewhat altered, so that he could not be perfectly sure of touching what Washington touched, yet he saw what Washington saw — the same placid meadow-lands, the same undulating horizon, the same calm stream. And it is thus that an old house of distinct association, asserts its claim, and secures its influence. It is a nucleus of interest, — a heart of romance, from which pulse a thousand reveries enchanting the summer hours. For although every old country mansion is invested with a nameless charm, from that antiquity which imagination is for ever crowding with the pageant of a stately and beautiful life, yet if there be some clearly outlined story, even a historic scene peculiar to it, then around that, as the bold and picturesque foreground, all the imagery of youth and love and beauty, in a

thousandfold variety of development, is grouped, and every room has its poetic passage, every window its haunting face, every garden path its floating and fading form of a quite imperishable beauty.

So the young man passed not unaccompanied down the elm-shaded path, but the air and the scene were affluent of radiant phantoms. Imaginary ladies of a state and dignity only possible in the era of periwigs, advanced in all the solemnity of mob-caps to welcome the stranger. Grave old courtiers, be-ruffled, be-wigged, sworded and laced, trod inaudibly, with gracious bow, the spacious walk, and comely maidens, resident in mortal memory now only as shrivelled and tawny duennas, glanced modest looks, and wondered what new charm had risen that morning upon the somewhat dull horizon of their life. These, arrayed in the richness of a poet's fancy, advanced to welcome him. For well they knew whatever of peculiar interest adorned their house would blossom into permanent forms of beauty in the light of genius. They advanced to meet him as the inhabitants of foreign and strange towns approach with supplication and submission the leader in whose eye flames victory, sure that he would do for them more than they could do for themselves.

But when the brazen clang of the huge knocker had ceased resounding, the great door slowly opened, and no phantom serving-man, but a veritable flesh and blood retainer of the hostess of the mansion invited the visitor to enter. He inquired for Mrs. Cragie. In answer the door of a little parlor was thrown open, and the young man beheld a tall, erect figure, majestically crowned with a tur-

ban, beneath which burned a pair of keen gray eyes. A commanding gravity of deportment, harmonious with the gentlewoman's age, and with the ancestral respectability of the mansion, assured profound respect; while, at a glance, it was clear to see that combination of reduced dignity condescending to a lower estate, and that pride of essential superiority to circumstances, which is traditional among women in the situation of the turbaned lady. There was kindliness mellowing the severity of her reply to her visitor's inquiry if there was a room vacant in the house.

"I lodge students no longer," she responded gravely, possibly not without regret, — as she contemplated the applicant, — that she had vowed so stern a resolution.

"But I am not a student," answered the stranger; "I am a Professor in the University."

"A Professor?" said she inquiringly, as if her mind failed to conceive a Professor without a clerical sobriety of apparel, a white cravat, or at least, spectacles.

"Professor Longfellow," continued the guest, introducing himself.

"Ah! that is different," said the old lady, her features slightly relaxing, as if professors were, ex-officio, innocuous, and she need no longer barricade herself behind a stern gravity of demeanor. "I will show you what there is."

Thereupon she preceded the Professor up the stairs, and gaining the upper hall, paused at each door, opened it, permitted him to perceive its delightful fitness for his purpose, — kindled expectation to the utmost — then quietly closed the door again, observing, "You cannot have that." It was most Barmecide hospitality. The professorial eyes glanced rest-

lessly around the fine old-fashioned points of the mansion, marked the wooden carvings, the air of opulent respectability in the past, which corresponds in New England to the impression of ancient nobility in old England, and wondered in which of these pleasant fields of suggestive association he was to be allowed to pitch his tent. The turbaned hostess at length opened the door of the southeast corner room in the second story, and, while the guest looked wistfully in and awaited the customary "You cannot have that," he was agreeably surprised by a variation of the strain to the effect that he might occupy it.

The room was upon the front of the house, and looked over the meadows to the river. It had an atmosphere of fascinating repose, in which the young man was at once domesticated, as in an old home. The elms of the avenue shaded his windows, and as he glanced from them, the summer lay asleep upon the landscape in the windless day.

"This," said the old lady, with a slight sadness in her voice, as if speaking of times for ever past and to which she herself properly belonged,—"this was General Washington's chamber."

A light more pensive played over the landscape, in the Poet's eyes, as he heard her words. He knew that such a presence had consecrated the house, and peculiarly that room. He felt that whoever fills the places once occupied by the great and good, is himself held to greatness and goodness by a sympathy and necessity sweet as mysterious. For ever after, his imagination is a more lordly picture-gallery than that of ancestral halls. Through that gallery he wanders, strong in his humility and resolve, valiant as the

last scion of noble Norman races, devoting himself as of old knights were devoted, by earnest midnight meditation and holy vows, to

> "Act, — act in the living Present!
> Heart within, and God o'erhead!"

The stately hostess retired, and the next day the new lodger took possession of his room. He lived entirely apart from the old lady, although under the same roof. Her manner of life was quiet and unobtrusive. The silence of the ancient mansion, which to its new resident was truly "the still air of delightful studies," was not disturbed by the shrill cackle of a country household. In the morning, after he had settled himself to the day's occupation, the scholar heard the faint and measured tread of the old lady as she descended to breakfast, her silken gown rustling along the hall as if the shadowy brocade of some elder dame departed, who failed to discover in the ghostly stillness of the well-known passage, that she had wandered from her sphere. Then, after due interval, if, upon his way to the day's collegiate duties, the Professor entered the hostess's little parlor to offer her good morning or make some domestic suggestion, he found her seated by the open window, through which stole the sweet New England air, lifting the few gray locks that straggled from the turban, as tenderly as Greek winds played with Helen's curls. Upon her lap lay an open volume of Voltaire, possibly, for the catholicity of the old lady's mind entertained whatever was vigorous and free, — and from the brilliant wit of the Frenchman, and his icy precision of thought and statement, she turned to the warm

day that flooded the meadows with summer, and which in the high tree-tops above her head sang in breezy, fitful cadences of a beauty that no denizen of the summer shall ever see, and a song sweeter than he shall ever hear. It was because she had heard and felt this breath of nature that the matron in her quaint old age could enjoy the page of the Frenchman, even as in her youth she could have admired the delicacy of his point-lace ruffles, nor have less enjoyed, by reason of that admiration, the green garden-walk of Ferney, in which she might have seen them.

Or at times, as the scholar studied, he heard footsteps upon the walk, and the old knocker clanged the arrival of guests, who passed into the parlor, and, as the door opened and closed, he could hear, far away and confused, the sounds of stately conversation, until there was a prolonged and louder noise, a bustle, the jar of the heavy door closing, the dying echo of footsteps, — and then the deep and ghostly silence again closed around the small event as the sea ripples into calm over a sinking stone. Or more dreamily still, as at twilight the Poet sat musing in his darkening room — hearing the "footsteps of angels" sounding, melodious and low, through all the other "voices of the Night," he seemed to catch snatches of mournful music thrilling the deep silence with sorrow, and, listening more intently, he heard distinctly the harpsichord in the old lady's parlor, and knew that she was sitting, turbaned and wrinkled, where she had sat in the glowing triumph of youth, and with wandering fingers was drawing in feeble and uncertain cadence from the keys, tunes she had once dashed from them in all the fulness of harmony. Or when, the summer following the

Poet's arrival, the blight of canker-worms fell upon the stately old trees before the house, and struck them mortally, so that they gradually wasted and withered away,—if then the young man entered her parlor and finding her by the open window, saw that the worms were crawling over her dress and hanging from her white turban, and asked her if they were not disagreeable and if she would do nothing to destroy them, she raised her eyes from another book than Voltaire's and said to him gravely, "Why, sir, they are our fellow-worms, and have as good a right to live as we." And as the Poet returned to his chamber, musing more than ever upon the Saturn Time that so remorselessly consumes his own children, and picturing the gay youth of the grave old hostess, he could not but pause, leaning upon the heavy balusters of the stairs, and remember the tradition of the house, that once, as an old hostess, like his own, lay waiting for death in her chamber, she sent for her young guest, like himself, to come and take last leave of her, and as he entered her room, and advancing to her bedside, saw her lying stretched at length and clutching the clothes closely around her neck, so that only her sharply featured and shrunken face was visible,—the fading eye opened upon him for a moment and he heard from the withered lips this stern whisper of farewell,—"Young man, never marry, for beauty comes to this!"

The lines of the Poet had fallen in pleasant places. With the old house and its hostess, and its many known and unknown associations, there was no lack of material for thought and speculation. A country-house in New England which is not only old, but by the character of its structure and

its coherent history, suggests a life of more interest and dignity than that of a simple countryman "whose only aim was to increase his store," is interesting in the degree of its rarity. The traveller upon the high road before the Cragie House, even if he knew nothing of its story, would be struck by its quaint dignity and respectability, and make a legend, if he could not find one already made. If, however, his lot had been cast in Cambridge, and he had been able to secure a room in the mansion, he would not rest until he had explored the traditions of its origin and occupancy, and had given his fancy moulds in which to run its images. He would have found in the churchyard of Cambridge a free-stone tablet supported by five pillars, upon which, with the name Col. John Vassal died in 1747, are sculptured the words—Vas–sol, and the emblems, a goblet and sun. Whether this device was a proud assertion of the fact, that the fortunes of the family should be always as

"A beaker full of the warm South,"

happily no historian records; for the beaker has long since been drained to the dregs, and of the stately family nothing survived in the early part of the Poet's residence in the house, but an old black man who had been born, a slave, in the mansion during the last days of the Vassals, and who occasionally returned to visit his earliest haunts like an Indian the hunting-grounds of his extinct tribe.

This Col. John Vassal is supposed to have built the house towards the close of the first half of the last century. Upon an iron in the back of one of the chimneys, there is the date, 1759—which probably commemorates no more than the fact

of its own insertion at that period, inasmuch as the builder of the house would hardly commit the authentic witness of its erection to the mercies of smoke and soot. History capitulates before the exact date of the building of the Cragie House, as completely as before that of the foundation of Thebes. But the house was evidently generously built, and Col. John Vassal having lived there in generous style, died, and lies under the free-stone tablet. His son John fell upon revolutionary times, and was a royalist. The observer of the house will not be surprised at the fact. That the occupant of such a mansion should, in colonial troubles, side with the government was as natural as the fealty of a Douglas or a Howard to the king.

The house, however, passed from his hands, and was purchased by the provincial government at the beginning of serious work with the mother country. After the battle of Bunker Hill, it was allotted to General Washington as his headquarters. It was entirely unfurnished, but the charity of neighbors filled it with necessary furniture. The south-eastern room upon the lower floor, at the right of the front door, and now occupied as a study by Mr. Longfellow, was devoted to the same purpose by Washington. The room over it, as Madame Cragie has already informed us, was his chamber. The room upon the lower floor, in the rear of the study, which was afterwards enlarged and is now the Poet's library, was occupied by the aids-de-camps of the commander-in-chief. And the southwest room, upon the lower floor, was Mrs. Washington's drawing-room. The rich old wood carving in this apartment is still remarkable, still certifies the frequent presence of fine society. For, although

during the year in which Washington occupied the mansion, there could have been as little desire as means for gay festivity; yet Washington and his leading associates were all gentlemen—men who would have graced the elegance of a court with the same dignity that made the plainness of a republic admirable. Many of Washington's published letters, are dated from this house. And could the walls whisper, we should hear more and better things of him, than could ever be recorded. In his chamber are still the gay-painted tiles peculiar to fine houses of the period; and upon their quaint and grotesque images the glancing eyes of the Poet's children now wonderingly linger, where the sad and doubtful ones of Washington must have often fallen as he meditated the darkness of the future.

Many of these peculiarities and memories of the mansion appear in the Poet's verses. In the opening of the poem "To a Child," whence our motto is taken, the tiles are painted anew.

> "The lady with the gay macaw,
> The dancing girl, the grave Bashaw
> With bearded lip and chin;
> And, leaning idly o'er his gate,
> Beneath the imperial fan of state,
> The Chinese mandarin."

The next figure that distinctly appears in the old house is that of Thomas Tracy, a personage of whom the household traditions are extremely fond. He was a rich man, in the fabulous style of the East; such a nabob as Oriental imaginations can everywhere easily conjure, while practical experience wonders that they are so rare. He carried him-

self with a rare lavishness. Servants drank costly wines from carved pitchers in the incredible days of Thomas Tracy; and in his stately mansion, a hundred guests sat down to banquets, and pledged their host in draughts whose remembrance keep his name sweet, as royal bodies were preserved in wine and spices. In the early days of national disorder, he sent out privateers to scour the seas and bleed Spanish galleons of their sunniest juices, and reap golden harvests of fruits and spices, of silks and satins, from East and West Indian ships, that the bountiful table of Vassal House might not fail, nor the carousing days of Thomas Tracy become credible. But these "spacious times" of the large-hearted and large-handed gentleman suddenly ended. The wealthy man failed; no more hundred guests appeared at banquets; no more privateers sailed into Boston Bay, reeking with riches from every zone; Spain, the Brazils, the Indies, no more rolled their golden sands into the pockets of Thomas Tracy; servants, costly wines, carved pitchers, all began to glimmer and go, and finally Thomas Tracy and his incredible days vanished as entirely as the gorgeous pavilions with which the sun in setting piles the summer west.

After this illuminated chapter in the history of the house, Captain Joseph Lee, a brother of Madame Tracy, appears in the annals, but does not seem to have illustrated them by any special gifts or graces. Tradition remains silent, pining for Thomas Tracy, until it lifts its head upon the entry into the house of Andrew Cragie, Apothecary-General to the Northern provincial army, who amassed a fortune in that office, which, like his great predecessor, he presently

lost; but not until he had built a bridge over the Charles river, connecting Cambridge with Boston, which is still known by his name. Andrew Cragie did much for the house, even enlarging it to its present form; but tradition is hard upon him. It declares that he was a huge man, heavy and dull; and evidently looks upon his career as the high lyric of Thomas Tracy's, muddled into tough prose. In the best and most prosperous days of Andrew Cragie, the estate comprised two hundred acres. Upon the site of the present observatory, not far from the mansion, stood a summer-house, but whether of any rare architectural device, whether, in fact, any orphic genius of those days "said" a summer-house, which, like that of Mr. Emerson's, only "lacked scientific arrangement" to be quite perfect, does not appear. Like the apothecary to the Northern army, the summer-house is gone, as likewise an aqueduct that brought water a quarter of a mile. Tradition, so enamored of Tracy, is generous enough to mention a dinner-party given by Andrew Cragie every Saturday, and on one occasion points out peruked and powdered Talleyrand among the guests. This betrays the presence in the house of the best society then to be had. But the prosperous Cragie could not avoid the fate of his opulent predecessor, who also gave banquets. Things rushed on too rapidly for him. The bridge, aqueduct and summer-house, two hundred acres and an enlarged house, were too much for the fortune acquired in dealing medicaments to the Northern army. The "spacious times" of Andrew Cragie also came to an end. A visitor walked with him through his large and handsome rooms, and struck with admiration, exclaimed,

"Mr. Cragie, I should think you could lose yourself in all this spaciousness."

"Mr. ———" (tradition has forgotten the name) said the hospitable and ruined host, "I *have* lost myself in it,"—and we do not find him again.

After his disappearance Mrs. Cragie, bravely swallowing the risings of pride, and still revealing in her character and demeanor the worthy mistress of a noble mansion, let rooms. Edward Everett resided here just after his marriage, and while still Professor in the college of which he was afterward President. Willard Phillips, Jared Sparks, now the head of the University, and Joseph E. Worcester, the Lexicographer, have all resided here, sometimes sharing the house with Mrs. Cragie, and, in the case of Mr. Worcester, occupying it jointly with Mr. Longfellow when the grave old lady removed her stately turban for the last time.

The Cragie House is now the Poet's, and has again acquired a distinctive interest in history. It was in Portland, Maine, in the year 1807, and in an old square wooden house upon the edge of the sea, that Longfellow was born. The old house stood upon the outskirts of the town, separated only by a street from the water. In the lower story there is now a shop,—a bookseller's, doubtless,—muses imagination,—so that the same house which gave a singer to the world may offer to the world his songs to justify its pride in him. He graduated at Brunswick with Hawthorne, whom then the Poet knew only as a shy youth in a bright-buttoned coat, flitting across the college grounds. During his college days he wooed the muses, as all students woo; and in the United States Literary Gazette, then published in Boston,

the world learned how his suit prospered. In 1826 Longfellow first visited Europe. He loitered through France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Holland and England, and returned to America in 1829. Appointed Professor in his alma mater, he devoted himself to the scholar's life, poring long and earnestly over the literature of lands which he knew so well and truly that their literature lived for him and was not a hard hieroglyph only. During these quiet professional years he contributed articles to the North American Review — a proceeding not unprecedented among New England scholars, and in which Emerson, the Everetts, and all the more illustrious of the literary men of the north, have been participants. The forms of foreign travel gradually grouped themselves in his mind. Vivid pictures of European experience, such as illuminate the memory of every young and romantic traveller, constantly flashed along his way, and he began to retrace them in words, that others might know, according to the German proverb, that "behind the mountains there are men also."

In this way commenced the publication of "Outre Mer, or Sketches from Beyond Sea," a work of foreign reminiscences, — tales and reveries of the life peculiar to Europe. It was published, originally, in numbers, by Samuel Colman, a townsman of the author's. Like the Sketch Book, it was issued whenever a number was prepared, but unlike the author of the Sketch Book, the Professor could not write as his motto, "I have no wife nor children, good or bad, to provide for;" for in the midst of the quiet professorial days, still a very young man, the Poet was married, — a fleeting joy ending by the death of his wife in Rotterdam in 1835.

In Brunswick, also, and at this time, he made the translation of the ode upon "Coplas de Manrique," by his son Don Joze Manrique, a rich, mournfully-rolling Spanish poem. The earlier verses of the young man had made their mark. In school reading-books, and in volumes of elegant extracts, and preserved in many a daintily ribboned manuscript, the "April Day," "Woods in Winter," "Hymn of the Moravian Nuns at Bethlehem," "Burial of the Minnisink," and others, were readily found. As yet the Poet was guiltless of a volume, but his name was known, and upon the credit of a few fugitive pieces he was mentioned first after the monopolizing masters of American verse.

In the year 1835 he received the appointment of Professor in Harvard College, Cambridge, which he accepted, but sailed for Europe again in the course of the year. Upon leaving he committed the publication of "Outre Mer" to the Harpers in New-York, who issued the entire work in two volumes. The second European visit was confined to the north of Europe, Denmark, England, Sweden, Germany, a long pause in Holland, and Paris. In the autumn of 1836 he returned, and in December of the same year removed to Cambridge to reside. Here, again, the North American Review figures a little in the literary life of the Poet. He wrote several articles for it during the leisure of his engagements as Professor of Modern Literature, and, at length, as we have seen, one calm afternoon in the summer of 1837, Longfellow first took lodgings in the Cragie House, with which the maturity and extent of his reputation was to be so closely associated.

Some wan ghost of Thomas Tracy, lordly with lace and



gracious in perfumed pomp, surely the Poet saw advancing, holding in his hand some one of those antique carved pitchers brimmed with that costly wine, and exhorting him to drain potent draughts, that not by him should the fame of the incredible days be tarnished, but that, as when a hundred guests sat at the banquet, and a score of full-freighted ships arrived for Thomas Tracy, the traveller should say,

> "A purple light shines over all,
> It beams from the Luck of Edenhall."

The vow was pledged, and now under the few elms that remain of those which the fellow-worms of Mrs. Cragie blighted, the ghost of Thomas Tracy walks appeased.

In his still southeastern upper chamber, in which Washington had also slept, the Poet wrote "Hyperion" in the years 1838–9. It is truly a romance, a beaker of the wine of youth, and was instantly received as such by the public. That public was, and must always be, of the young. No book had appeared which so admirably expressed the romantic experience of every poetic young mind in Europe, and an experience which will be constantly renewed. Probably no American book had ever so passionate a popularity as "Hyperion." It was published in the summer of 1839 by Colman, who had then removed to New-York, but at the time of publication he failed, and it was undertaken by John Owen, the University publisher in Cambridge. It is a singular tribute to the integrity of the work, and a marked illustration of the peculiarity of American development, that Horace Greeley, famous as a political journalist, and intimately associated with every kind of positive and practical

movement, was among the very earliest of the warmest lovers of "Hyperion." It shows our national eclecticism of sentiment and sense, which is constantly betraying itself in a thousand other ways.

Here, too, in the southeast chamber, were written the "Voices of the Night," published in 1840. Some of the more noted, such as the "Psalm of Life," had already appeared in the Knickerbocker Magazine. Strangely enough as a fact in American literary history, the fame of the romance was even surpassed, and one of the most popular books of the day was Longfellow's Poems. They were read every where by every one, and were republished and have continued to be republished in England and in various other countries. The secret of his popularity as a poet is probably that of all similar popularity, namely, the fact that his poetry expresses a universal sentiment in the simplest and most melodious manner. Each of his most noted poems is the song of a feeling common to every mind in moods into which every mind is liable to fall. Thus "A Psalm of Life," "Footsteps of Angels," "To the River Charles," "Excelsior," "The Bridge," "A Gleam of Sunshine," "The Day is done," "The Old Clock on the Stairs," "The Arrow and the Song," "The Fire of Driftwood," "Twilight," "The open Window," are all most adequate and inexpressibly delicate renderings of quite universal emotions. There is a humanity in them which is irresistible in the fit measures to which they are wedded. If some elegiac poets have strung rosaries of tears, there is a weakness of wo in their verses which repels; but the quiet, pensive thought,—the twilight of the mind, in which the little

facts of life are saddened in view of their relation to the eternal laws, time and change, — this is the meditation and mourning of every manly heart; and this is the alluring and permanent charm of Longfellow's poetry.

In 1842 the Ballads and other Poems were published, and in the same year the Poet sailed again for Europe. He passed the summer upon the Rhine, residing some time at Boppart, where he saw much of the ardent young German poet Freiligrath. He returned after a few months, composing the poems on slavery during the homeward passage. Upon landing, he found the world drunken with the grace of Fanny Ellsler, and learned, from high authority, that her saltations were more than poetry, whereupon he wrote the fragrant "Spanish Student," which smells of the utmost South, and was a strange blossoming for the garden of Thomas Tracy.

In 1843 Longfellow bought the house. The two hundred acres of Andrew Cragie had shrunken to eight. But the meadow-land in front sloping to the river was secured by the Poet, who thereby secured also the wide and winning prospect, the broad green reaches, and the gentle Milton hills. And if, sitting in the most midsummer moment of his life, he yielded to the persuasions of the siren landscape before him, and the vague voices of the ancestral house, and dreamed of a fate fairer than any Vassal, or Tracy, or Cragie knew, even when they mused upon the destiny of the proudest son of their house, — was it a dream too dear, a poem impossible?

In 1846 the "Belfry of Bruges" collection was published, in 1847 the "Evangeline," in 1850 "Seaside and Fireside,"

and in 1851 the last and best of his works, up to the present time — "The Golden Legend." In this poem he has obeyed the highest humanity of the poet's calling, by revealing, — which alone the poet can, — not coldly, but in the glowing and affluent reality of life, this truth, that the same human heart has throbbed in all ages and under all circumstances, and that the devotion of Love is for ever and from the beginning, the true salvation of man. To this great and fundamental value of the poem is added all the dramatic precision of the most accomplished artist. The art is so subtly concealed that it is not suspected. The rapid reader exclaims, "Why! there is no modern blood in this; it might have been exhumed in a cloister." Yes, and there is the triumph of art. So entirely are the intervening years annihilated that their existence is not suspected. Taking us by the hand, as Virgil Dante, the Poet introduces us directly to the time he chooses, and we are at once flushed and warmed by the same glorious and eternal heart which is also the light of our day. This is the stroke which makes all times and nations kin, and which, in any individual instance, certifies the poetic power.

The library of the Poet is the long northeastern room upon the lower floor. It opens upon the garden, which retains still the quaint devices of an antique design, harmonious with the house. The room is surrounded with handsome book-cases, and one stands also between two Corinthian columns at one end, which impart dignity and richness to the apartment. A little table by the northern window, looking upon the garden, is the usual seat of the Poet. A bust or two, the rich carvings of the cases, the

spaciousness of the room, a leopard-skin lying upon the floor, and a few shelves of strictly literary curiosities, reveal not only the haunt of the elegant scholar and poet, but the favorite resort of the family circle. But the northern gloom of a New England winter is intolerant of this serene delight, this beautiful domesticity, and urges the inmates to the smaller room in front of the house communicating with the library, and the study of General Washington. This is still distinctively "the study," as the rear room is "the library." Books are here, and all the graceful detail of an elegant household, and upon the walls hang crayon portraits of Emerson, Sumner, and Hawthorne.

Emerging into the hall, the eyes of the enamored visitor fall upon the massive old staircase with the clock upon the landing. Directly he hears a singing in his mind:

> "Somewhat back from the village street,
> Stands the old-fashioned country-seat,
> Across its antique portico
> Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw,
> And from its station in the hall
> An ancient timepiece says to all,
> 'For ever — never!
> Never — for ever!'"

But he does not see the particular clock of the poem, which stood upon another staircase in another quaint old mansion, — although the verse truly belongs to all old clocks in all old country-seats, just as the "Village Blacksmith" and his smithy are not alone the stalwart man and dingy shop under the "spreading chestnut-tree" which the Profes-

sor daily passes upon his way to his college duties, but belong wherever a smithy stands. Through the meadows in front flows the placid Charles.

> "River! that in silence windest
> Thro' the meadows, bright and free,
> Till at length thy rest thou findest
> In the bosom of the sea!"

So calmly, likewise, flows the Poet's life. No longer in his reveries can mingle more than the sweet melancholy of the old house's associations. No tradition records a ghost in those ghostly chambers. As if all sign of them should pass away, not only Mrs. Cragie's fellow-worms destroyed the elms in front, but a noble linden-tree in the garden, faded as she failed, and languished into decay after her death. But the pensive grandeur of an old mansion sheds a softer than the "purple light" of the luck of Edenhall upon the Poet's fancies and his page. He who has written the Golden Legend knows, best of all, the reality and significance of that life in the old Cragie House, whose dates, except for this slight sketch, had almost dropped from history. And while the exquisite music of this poem of our author's lingers in the heart of the reader, as he turns from this page, will he not seem to be sitting, on one of the dreamy summer afternoons, in the old chamber where so often the young Poet sat lost in the luxury of reverie, and hearing with intoxicating sadness the ghosts of tunes long since forgotten, which the turbaned and trembling widow of Andrew Cragie vaguely played upon the harpsichord:

Send Proof to
Harry W. Longfellow
Cambridge.

The Fifth Psalm.

A Midnight Mass for the Dying Year

I.

Yes, the Year is growing old,
And his eye is pale and bleared;
Death, with frosty hand and cold,
Plucks the old man by the beard,
Sorely sorely!

The old house by the Lindens
Stood silent in the shade,
And on the gravelled pathway
The light and shadow played.

"I saw the nursery window
Wide open to the air;
But the faces of the children,
They were no longer there.

"The large Newfoundland house-dog
Was standing by the door;
He looked for his little playmates
Who would return no more.

"They walked not under the Lindens,
They played not in the hall;
But shadow, and silence, and sadness,
Were hanging over all.

"The birds sang in the branches,
With sweet, familiar tone;
But the voices of the children
Will be heard in dreams alone!

"And the boy that walked beside me,
He could not understand
Why closer in mine, ah! closer,
I pressed his warm, soft hand."

Nathaniel Hawthorne.



HAWTHORNE.

HAWTHORNE has himself drawn the picture of the "Old Manse" in Concord. He has given to it that quiet richness of coloring which ideally belongs to an old country mansion. It seemed so fitting a residence for one who loves to explore the twilight of antiquity — and the gloomier the better — that the visitor, among the felicities of whose life was included the freedom of the Manse, could not but fancy that our author's eyes first saw the daylight enchanted by the slumberous orchard behind the house, or

tranquillized into twilight by the spacious avenue in front. The character of his imagination, and the golden gloom of its blossoming, completely harmonize with the rusty, gable-roofed old house upon the river side, and the reader of his books would be sure that his boyhood and youth knew no other friends than the dreaming river, and the melancholy meadows and drooping foliage of its vicinity.

Since the reader, however, would greatly mistake if he fancied this, in good sooth, the ancestral halls of the Hawthornes, — the genuine Hawthorne-den, — he will be glad to save the credit of his fancy by knowing that it was here our author's bridal tour, — which commenced in Boston, then three hours away, — ended, and his married life began. Here, also, his first child was born, and here those sad and silver mosses accumulated upon his fancy, from which he heaped so soft a bed for our dreaming. "Between two tall gate-posts of rough hewn stone (the gate itself having fallen from its hinges at some unknown epoch) we beheld the gray front of the old parsonage, terminating the vista of an avenue of black ash trees." It was a pleasant spring day in the year 1843, and as they entered the house, nosegays of fresh flowers, arranged by friendly hands, welcomed them to Concord and Summer.

The dark-haired man, who led his wife along the avenue that afternoon, had been recently an officer of the customs in Boston, before which he had led a solitary life in Salem. Graduated with Longfellow at Bowdoin College, in Maine, he had lived a hermit in respectable Salem, an absolute recluse even from his own family, walking out by night and writing wild tales by day, most of which were burnt

in his bachelor fire, and some of which, in newspapers, magazines and annuals, led a wandering, uncertain, and mostly unnoticed life. Those tales, among this class, which were attainable, he collected into a small volume, and apprising the world that they were "twice-told," sent them forth anew to make their own way, in the year 1841. But he piped to the world, and it did not sing. He wept to it, and it did not mourn. The book, however, as all good books do, made its way into various hearts. Yet the few penetrant minds which recognized a remarkable power and a method of strange fascination in the stories, did not make the public, nor influence the public mind. "I was," he says in the last edition of these tales, "the most unknown author in America." Full of glancing wit, of tender satire, of exquisite natural description, of subtle and strange analysis of human life, darkly passionate and weird, they yet floated unhailed barques upon the sea of publicity,—unhailed, but laden and gleaming at every crevice with the true treasure of Cathay. Bancroft, then Collector in Boston, prompt to recognize and to honor talent, made the dreaming story-teller a surveyor in the custom-house, thus opening to him a new range of experience. From the society of phantoms he stepped upon Long Wharf and plumply confronted Captain Cuttle and Dirck Hatteraick. It was no less romance to our author. There is no greater error of those who are called "practical men," than the supposition that life is, or can be, other than a dream to a dreamer. Shut him up in a counting-room, barricade him with bales of merchandise and limit his library to the ledger and cash-book, and his prospect to the neighboring signs; talk "Bills receivable" and "Sundries Dr. to cash"

to him for ever, and you are only a very amusing or very annoying phantom to him. The merchant-prince might as well hope to make himself a poet, as the poet a practical or practicable man. He has laws to obey not at all the less stringent because men of a different temperament refuse to acknowledge them, and he is held to a loyalty quite beyond their conception.

So Captain Cuttle and Dirck Hatteraick were as pleasant figures to our author in the picture of life, as any others. He went daily upon the vessels, looked, and listened, and learned,—was a favorite of the sailors, as such men always are,—did his work faithfully, and having dreamed his dream upon Long Wharf, was married and slipped up to the Old Manse, and a new chapter in the romance. It opened in "the most delightful little nook of a study that ever offered its snug seclusion to a scholar." Of the three years in the Old Manse the prelude to the "Mosses" is the most perfect history, and of the quality of those years the "Mosses" themselves are sufficient proof. They were mostly written in the little study, and originally published in the Democratic Review, then edited by Hawthorne's friend O'Sullivan.

To the inhabitants of Concord, however, our author was as much a phantom and a fable as the old pastor of the parish, dead half a century before, and whose faded portrait in the attic was gradually rejoining its original in native dust. The gate, fallen from its hinges in a remote antiquity, was never re-hung. "The wheel-track leading to the door" remained still overgrown with grass. No bold villager ever invaded the sleep of "the glimmering shadows" in the

avenue. At evening no lights gleamed from the windows. Scarce once in many months did the single old knobby-faced coachman at the railroad bring a fare to "Mr. Hawthorne's." "*Is* there anybody in the old house?" sobbed the old ladies in despair, imbibing tea of a livid green. That knocker, which every body had enjoyed the right of lifting to summon the good old Pastor, no temerity now dared to touch. Heavens! what if the figure in the mouldy portrait should peer, in answer, over the eaves, and shake solemnly his decaying surplice! Nay, what if the mysterious man himself should answer the summons and come to the door! It is easy to summon spirits,—but if they come? Collective Concord, mowing in the river meadows, embraced the better part of valor and left the knocker untouched. A cloud of romance suddenly fell out of the heaven of fancy and enveloped the Old Manse:—

> "In among the bearded barley
> The reaper reaping late and early"

did not glance more wistfully toward the island of Shalott and its mysterious lady than the reapers of Concord rye looked at the Old Manse and wondered over its inmate.

Sometimes, in the forenoon, a darkly clad figure was seen in the little garden-plot putting in corn or melon seed, and gravely hoeing. It was a brief apparition. The farmer passing toward town and seeing the solitary cultivator, lost his faith in the fact and believed he had dreamed, when, upon returning, he saw no sign of life, except, possibly, upon some Monday, the ghostly skirt of a shirt flapping spectrally in the distant orchard. Day dawned and darkened over the lonely

house. Summer with "buds and bird-voices" came singing in from the South, and clad the old ash trees in deeper green, the Old Manse in profounder mystery. Gorgeous autumn came to visit the story-teller in his little western study, and departing, wept rainbows among his trees. Winter impatiently swept down the hill opposite, rifling the trees of each last clinging bit of Summer, as if thrusting aside opposing barriers and determined to search the mystery. But his white robes floated around the Old Manse, ghostly as the decaying surplice of the old Pastor's portrait, and in the snowy seclusion of Winter the mystery was as mysterious as ever.

Occasionally Emerson, or Ellery Channing, or Henry Thoreau, — some Poet, as once Whittier, journeying to the Merrimac, or an old Brook Farmer who remembered Miles Coverdale, with Arcadian sympathy, — went down the avenue and disappeared in the house. Sometimes a close observer, had he been ambushed among the long grasses of the orchard, might have seen the host and one of his guests emerging at the back door and sauntering to the river-side, step into the boat, and float off until they faded in the shadow. The spectacle would not have lessened the romance. If it were afternoon, — one of the spectrally sunny afternoons which often bewitch that region, — he would be only the more convinced that there was something inexplicable in the whole matter of this man whom nobody knew, who was never once seen at town-meeting, and concerning whom it was whispered that he did not constantly attend church all day, although he occupied the reverend parsonage of the village, and had unmeas-

ured acres of manuscript sermons in his attic, beside the nearly extinct portrait of an utterly extinct clergyman. Mrs. Radcliffe and Monk Lewis were nothing to this; and the awe-stricken observer, if he could creep safely out of the long grass, did not fail to do so quietly, fortifying his courage by remembering stories of the genial humanity of the last old Pastor who inhabited the Manse, and who for fifty years was the bland and beneficent Pope of Concord. A genial, gracious old man, whose memory is yet sweet in the village, and who, wedded to the grave traditions of New England theology, believed of his young relative Waldo Emerson, as Miss Flighty, touching her forehead, said of her landlord, that he was "*m*, quite *m*," but was proud to love in him the hereditary integrity of noble ancestors.

This old gentleman, — an eminent figure in the history of the Manse, and in all reminiscences of Concord, — partook sufficiently of mundane weaknesses to betray his mortality. Hawthorne describes him watching the battle of Concord, from his study window. But when the uncertainty of that dark moment had so happily resulted, and the first battle-ground of the revolution had become a spot of hallowed and patriotic consideration, it was a pardonable pride in the good old man to order his servant, whenever there was company, to assist him in reaping the glory due to the owner of a spot so sacred. Accordingly, when some reverend or distinguished guest sat with the Pastor in his little parlor, or, of a summer evening, at the hospitable door under the trees, Jeremiah or Nicodemus, the cow-boy, would deferentially approach and inquire, —

"Into what pasture shall I turn the cow to-night, Sir?"

And the old gentleman would audibly reply:

"Into the battle-field, Nicodemus, into the battle-field!"

Then naturally followed wonder, inquiry, a walk in the twilight to the river-bank, the old gentleman's story, the corresponding respect of the listening visitor, and the consequent quiet complacency and harmless satisfaction in the clergyman's bosom. That throb of pride was the one drop of peculiar advantage which the Pastor distilled from the revolution. He could not but fancy that he had a hand in so famous a deed accomplished upon land now his own, and demeaned himself, accordingly, with continental dignity.

The pulpit, however, was his especial sphere. There he reigned supreme; there he exhorted, rebuked and advised, as in the days of Mather. There he inspired that profound reverence, of which he was so proud, and which induced the matrons of the village, when he was coming to make a visit, to bedizen the children in their Sunday suits, to parade the best tea-pot, and to offer the most capacious chair. In the pulpit he delivered every thing with the pompous cadence of the elder New England clergy, and a sly joke is told at the expense of his even temper, that on one occasion, when loftily reading the hymn, he encountered a blot upon the page quite obliterating the word, but without losing the cadence, although in a very vindictive tone at the truant word, or the culprit who erased it, — he finished the reading as follows:

"He sits upon his throne above,
Attending angels bless,
While Justice, Mercy, Truth,—and another word which is blotted out,
Compose his princely dress."

We linger around the Old Manse and its occupants as fondly as Hawthorne, but no more fondly than all who have been once within the influence of its spell. There glimmer in my memory a few hazy days, of a tranquil and half pensive character, which I am conscious were passed in and around the house, and their pensiveness I know to be only that touch of twilight which inhered in the house and all its associations. Beside the few chance visitors I have named, there were city friends, occasionally, figures quite unknown to the village, who came preceded by the steam-shriek of the locomotive, were dropped at the gate-posts, and were seen no more. The owner was as much a vague name to me as to any one.

During Hawthorne's first year's residence in Concord, I had driven up with some friends to an esthetic tea at Mr. Emerson's. It was in the winter, and a great wood fire blazed upon the hospitable hearth. There were various men and women of note assembled, and I, who listened attentively to all the fine things that were said, was for some time scarcely aware of a man who sat upon the edge of the circle, a little withdrawn, his head slightly thrown forward upon his breast, and his bright eyes clearly burning under his black brow. As I drifted down the stream of talk, this person, who sat silent as a shadow, looked to me, as Webster might have looked, had he been a poet, — a kind of poetic Webster. He rose and walked to the window, and stood quietly there for a long time, watching the dead white landscape. No appeal was made to him, nobody looked after him, the conversation flowed steadily on as if every one understood that his silence was to be respect-

ed. It was the same thing at table. In vain the silent man imbibed esthetic tea. Whatever fancies it inspired did not flower at his lips. But there was a light in his eye which assured me that nothing was lost. So supreme was his silence that it presently engrossed me to the exclusion of every thing else. There was very brilliant discourse, but this silence was much more poetic and fascinating. Fine things were said by the philosophers, but much finer things were implied by the dumbness of this gentleman with heavy brows and black hair. When he presently rose and went, Emerson, with the "slow, wise smile" that breaks over his face, like day over the sky, said:

"Hawthorne rides well his horse of the night."

Thus he remained in my memory, a shadow, a phantom, until more than a year afterward. Then I came to live in Concord. Every day I passed his house, but when the villagers, thinking that perhaps I had some clue to the mystery, said,

"Do you know this Mr. Hawthorne?"

I said "No," and trusted to Time.

Time justified my confidence, and one day I, too, went down the avenue, and disappeared in the house. I mounted those mysterious stairs to that apocryphal study. I saw "the cheerful coat of paint, and golden-tinted paper-hangings, lighting up the small apartment; while the shadow of a willow tree, that swept against the overhanging eaves, attempered the cheery western sunshine." I looked from the little northern window whence the old Pastor watched the battle, and in the small dining-room beneath it, upon the first floor, there were

"Dainty chicken, snow-white bread,"

and the golden juices of Italian vineyards, which still feast insatiable memory.

Our author occupied the Old Manse for three years During that time he was not seen, probably, by more than a dozen of the villagers. His walks could easily avoid the town, and upon the river he was always sure of solitude. It was his favorite habit to bathe every evening in the river, after nightfall, and in that part of it over which the old bridge stood, at which the battle was fought. Sometimes, but rarely, his boat accompanied another up the stream, and I recall the silent and preternatural vigor with which, on one occasion, he wielded his paddle to counteract the bad rowing of a friend who conscientiously considered it his duty to do something and not let Hawthorne work alone; but who, with every stroke, neutralized all Hawthorne's efforts. I suppose he would have struggled until he fell senseless, rather than ask his friend to desist. His principle seemed to be, if a man cannot understand without talking to him, it is quite useless to talk, because it is immaterial whether such a man understands or not. His own sympathy was so broad and sure, that although nothing had been said for hours, his companion knew that not a thing had escaped his eye, nor had a single pulse of beauty in the day, or scene, or society, failed to thrill his heart. In this way his silence was most social. Every thing seemed to have been said. It was a Barmecide feast of discourse, from which a greater satisfaction resulted than from an actual banquet.

When a formal attempt was made to desert this style of conversation, the result was ludicrous. Once Emerson and Thoreau arrived to pay a call. They were shown into the little parlor upon the avenue, and Hawthorne presently entered. Each of the guests sat upright in his chair like a Roman Senator. "To them," Hawthorne, like a Dacian King. The call went on, but in a most melancholy manner. The host sat perfectly still, or occasionally propounded a question which Thoreau answered accurately, and there the thread broke short off. Emerson delivered sentences that only needed the setting of an essay, to charm the world; but the whole visit was a vague ghost of the Monday evening Club at Mr. Emerson's, — it was a great failure. Had they all been lying idly upon the river brink, or strolling in Thoreau's blackberry pastures, the result would have been utterly different. But imprisoned in the proprieties of a parlor, each a wild man in his way, with a necessity of talking inherent in the nature of the occasion, there was only a waste of treasure. This was the only "call" in which I ever knew Hawthorne to be involved.

In Mr. Emerson's house, I said it seemed always morning. But Hawthorne's black-ash trees and scraggy apple-boughs shaded

"A land in which it seemed always afternoon."

I do not doubt that the lotus grew along the grassy marge of the Concord behind his house, and that it was served, subtly concealed, to all his guests. The house, its inmates, and its life, lay, dream-like, upon the edge of the little village.

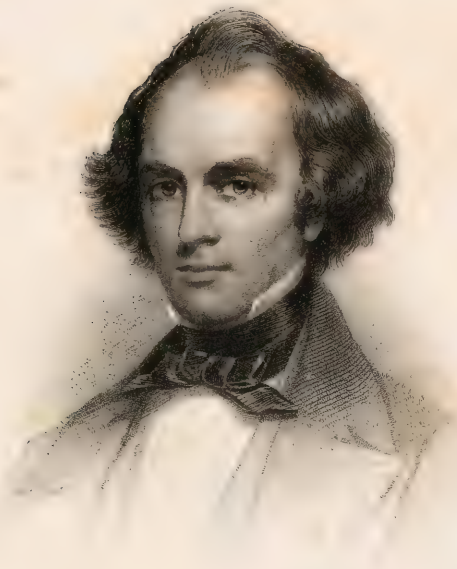
You fancied that they all came together and belonged together, and were glad that at length some idol of your imagination, some poet whose spell had held you, and would hold you for ever, was housed as such a poet should be.

During the lapse of the three years since the bridal tour of twenty miles ended at the "two tall gate-posts of rough hewn stone," a little wicker wagon had appeared at intervals upon the avenue, and a placid babe, whose eyes the soft Concord day had touched with the blue of its beauty, lay looking tranquilly up at the grave old trees, which sighed lofty lullabies over her sleep. The tranquillity of the golden-haired Una was the living and breathing type of the dreamy life of the Old Manse. Perhaps, that being attained, it was as well to go. Perhaps our author was not surprised nor displeased when the hints came, "growing more and more distinct, that the owner of the old house was pining for his native air." One afternoon I entered the study, and learned from its occupant that the last story he should ever write there was written. The son of the old pastor yearned for his homestead. The light of another summer would seek its poet in the Old Manse, but in vain.

While Hawthorne had been quietly writing in the "most delightful little nook of a study," Mr. Polk had been elected President, and Mr. Bancroft in the Cabinet did not forget his old friend the surveyor in the custom-house. There came suggestions and offers of various attractions. Still loving New England, would he tarry there, or, as inspector of woods and forests in some far-away island of the Southern Sea, some hazy strip of distance seen from Florida, would he taste the tropics? He meditated all the chances, without

immediately deciding. Gathering up his household gods, he passed out of the Old Manse as its heir entered, and before the end of summer was domesticated in the custom-house of his native town of Salem. This was in the year 1846. Upon leaving the Old Manse he published the "Mosses," announcing that it was the last collection of tales he should put forth. Those who knew him and recognized his value to our literature, trembled lest this was the last word from one who spoke only pearls and rubies. It was a foolish fear. The sun must shine — the sea must roll — the bird must sing, and the poet write. During his life in Salem, of which the introduction to the "Scarlet Letter" describes the official aspect, he wrote that romance. It is inspired by the spirit of the place. It presents more vividly than any history the gloomy picturesqueness of early New England life. There is no strain in our literature so characteristic or more real than that which Hawthorne had successfully attempted in several of his earlier sketches, and of which the "Scarlet Letter" is the great triumph. It became immediately popular, and directly placed the writer of stories for a small circle among the world's masters of romance.

Times meanwhile changed, and Presidents with them. General Taylor was elected, and the Salem Collector retired. It is one of the romantic points of Hawthorne's quiet life, that its changes have been so frequently determined by political events, which, of all others, are the most entirely foreign to his tastes and habits. He retired to the hills of Berkshire, the eye of the world now regarding his movements. There he lived a year or two in a little red cottage upon the "Stockbridge Bowl," as a small lake near that



Nath^l Hawthorne.

town is called. In this retreat he wrote the "House of the Seven Gables," which more deeply confirmed the literary position already acquired for him by the first romance. The scene is laid in Salem, as if he could not escape a strange fascination in the witch-haunted town of our early history. It is the same black canvas upon which plays the rainbow-flash of his fancy, never, in its brightest moment, more than illuminating the gloom. This marks all his writings. They have a terrible beauty, like the Siren, and their fascination is as sure.

After six years of absence, Hawthorne has returned to Concord, where he has purchased a small house formerly occupied by Orphic Alcott. When that philosopher came into possession, it was a miserable little house of two peaked gables. But the genius which recreated itself in devising graceful summer-houses, like that for Mr. Emerson, already noticed, soon smoothed the new residence into some kind of comeliness. It was an old house when Mr. Alcott entered it, but his tasteful finger touched it with picturesque grace. Not like a tired old drudge of a house, rusting into unhonored decay, but with a modest freshness that does not belie the innate sobriety of a venerable New England farm-house, the present residence of our author stands withdrawn a few yards from the high road to Boston, along which marched the British soldiers to Concord bridge. It lies at the foot of a wooded hill, a neat house of a "rusty olive hue," with a porch in front, and a central peak and a piazza at each end. The genius for summer-houses has had full play upon the hill behind. Here, upon the homely steppes of Concord, is a strain of Persia. Mr. Alcott built terraces, and arbors, and

pavilions, of boughs and rough stems of trees, revealing — somewhat inadequately, perhaps — the hanging gardens of delight that adorn the Babylon of his Orphic imagination. The hill-side is no unapt emblem of his intellectual habit, which garnishes the arid commonplaces of life with a cold poetic aurora, — forgetting that it is the inexorable law of light to deform as well as adorn. Treating life as a grand epic poem, the philosophic Alcott forgets that Homer must nod, or we should all fall asleep. The world would not be very beautiful nor interesting, if it were all one huge summit of Mont Blanc.

Unhappily, the terraced hill-side, like the summer-house upon Mr. Emerson's lawn, "lacks technical arrangement," and the wild winds play with these architectural toys of fancy, like lions with humming-birds. They are gradually falling, shattered, — and disappearing. Fine locust-trees shade them, and ornament the hill with perennial beauty. The hanging gardens of Semiramis were not more fragrant than Hawthorne's hill-side during the June blossoming of the locusts. A few young elms, some white pines and young oaks, complete the catalogue of trees. A light breeze constantly fans the brow of the hill, making harps of the tree-tops, and singing to our author, who "with a book in my hand, or an unwritten book in my thoughts," lies stretched beneath them in the shade.

From the height of the hill the eye courses, unrestrained, over the solitary landscape of Concord, broad and still, broken only by the slight wooded undulations of insignificant hillocks. The river is not visible, nor any gleam of lake. Walden pond is just behind the wood in front, and



not far away over the meadows sluggishly steals the river. It is the most quiet of prospects. Eight acres of good land lie in front of the house, across the road, and in the rear the estate extends a little distance over the brow of the hill.

This latter is not good garden-ground, but it yields that other crop which the poet "gathers in a song." Perhaps the world will forgive our author that he is not a prize farmer, and makes but an indifferent figure at the annual cattle-show. We have seen that he is more nomadic than agricultural. He has wandered from spot to spot, pitching a temporary tent, then striking it for "fresh fields and pastures new." It is natural, therefore, that he should call his house "the Wayside,"—a bench upon the road where he sits for a while before passing on. If the wayfarer finds him upon that bench he shall have rare pleasure in sitting with him, yet shudder while he stays. For the pictures of our poet have more than the shadows of Rembrandt. If you listen to his story, the lonely pastures and dull towns of our dear old homely New England shall become suddenly as radiant with grace and terrible with tragedy as any country and any time. The waning afternoon in Concord, in which the blue-frocked farmers are reaping and hoeing, shall set in pensive glory. The woods will for ever after be haunted with strange forms. You will hear whispers, and music "i' the air." In the softest morning you will suspect sadness; in the most fervent noon, a nameless terror. It is because the imagination of our author treads the almost imperceptible line between the natural and the supernatural. We are all conscious of striking it sometimes. But we avoid it. We recoil and hurry away, nor dare to glance over our

shoulders lest we should see phantoms. What are these tales of supernatural appearances, as well authenticated as any news of the day, — and what is the sphere which they imply? What is the more subtle intellectual apprehension of fate and its influence upon imagination and life? Whatever it is, it is the mystery of the fascination of these tales. They converse with that dreadful realm as with our real world. The light of our sun is poured by genius upon the phantoms we did not dare to contemplate, and lo! they are ourselves, unmasked, and playing our many parts. An unutterable sadness seizes the reader, as the inevitable black thread appears. For here Genius assures us what we trembled to suspect, but could not avoid suspecting, that the black thread is inwoven with all forms of life, with all development of character.

It is for this peculiarity, which harmonizes so well with ancient places, whose pensive silence seems the trance of memory musing over the young and lovely life that illuminated its lost years, — that Hawthorne is so intimately associated with the "Old Manse." Yet that was but the tent of a night for him. Already with the "Blithedale Romance," which is dated from Concord, a new interest begins to cluster around "the Wayside."

I know not how I can more fitly conclude these reminiscences of Concord and Hawthorne, whose own stories have always a saddening close, than by relating an occurrence which blighted to many hearts the beauty of the quiet Concord river, and seemed not inconsonant with its lonely landscape. It has the further fitness of typifying the operation of our author's imagination: a tranquil stream, clear and

bright with sunny gleams, crowned with lilies and graceful with swaying grass, yet doing terrible deeds inexorably, and therefore for ever after, of a shadowed beauty.

Martha was the daughter of a plain Concord farmer, a girl of delicate and shy temperament, who excelled so much in study, that she was sent to a fine academy in a neighboring town, and won all the honors of the course. She met at the school, and in the society of the place, a refinement and cultivation, a social gayety and grace, which were entirely unknown in the hard life she had led at home, and which by their very novelty, as well as because they harmonized with her own nature and dreams, were doubly beautiful and fascinating. She enjoyed this life to the full, while her timidity kept her only a spectator; and she ornamented it with a fresher grace, suggestive of the woods and fields, when she ventured to engage in the airy game. It was a sphere for her capacities and talents. She shone in it, and the consciousness of a true position and genial appreciation, gave her the full use of all her powers. She admired and was admired. She was surrounded by gratifications of taste, by the stimulants and rewards of ambition. The world was happy, and she was worthy to live in it. But at times a cloud suddenly dashed athwart the sun — a shadow stole, dark and chill, to the very edge of the charmed circle in which she stood. She knew well what it was, and what it foretold, but she would not pause nor heed. The sun shone again; the future smiled; youth, beauty, and all gentle hopes and thoughts, bathed the moment in lambent light.

But school-days ended at last, and with the receding town in which they had been passed, the bright days of life

disappeared, and for ever. It is probable that the girl's fancy had been fed, perhaps indiscreetly pampered, by her experience there. But it was no fairy land. It was an academy town in New England, and the fact that it was so alluring is a fair indication of the kind of life from which she had emerged, and to which she now returned. What could she do? In the dreary round of petty details, in the incessant drudgery of a poor farmer's household, with no companions of any sympathy — for the family of a hard-working New England farmer are not the Chloes and Clarissas of pastoral poetry, nor are cow-boys Corydons, — with no opportunity of retirement and cultivation, for reading and studying, which is always voted "stuff" under such circumstances, — the light suddenly quenched out of life, what was she to do?

"Adapt herself to her circumstances. Why had she shot from her sphere in this silly way?" demands unanimous common sense in valiant heroics.

The simple answer is, that she had only used all her opportunities, and that, although it was no fault of hers that the routine of her life was in every way repulsive, she did struggle to accommodate herself to it, — and failed. When she found it impossible to drag on at home, she became an inmate of a refined and cultivated household in the village, where she had opportunity to follow her own fancies, and to associate with educated and attractive persons. But even here she could not escape the feeling that it was all temporary, that her position was one of dependence; and her pride, now grown morbid, often drove her from the very society which alone was agreeable to her. This was all genuine.

There was not the slightest strain of the *femme incomprise* in her demeanor. She was always shy and silent, with a touching reserve which won interest and confidence, but left also a vague sadness in the mind of the observer. After a few months she made another effort to rend the cloud which was gradually darkening around her, and opened a school for young children. But although the interest of friends secured for her a partial success, her gravity and sadness failed to excite the sympathy of her pupils, who missed in her the playful gayety always most winning to children. Martha, however, pushed bravely on, a figure of tragic sobriety to all who watched her course. The farmers thought her a strange girl, and wondered at the ways of a farmer's daughter who was not content to milk cows, and churn butter, and fry pork, without further hope or thought. The good clergyman of the town, interested in her situation, sought a confidence she did not care to bestow, and so, doling out a, b, c, to a wild group of boys and girls, she found that she could not untie the Gordian knot of her life, and felt, with terror, that it must be cut.

One summer evening she left her father's house and walked into the fields alone. Night came, but Martha did not return. The family became anxious, inquired if any one had noticed the direction in which she went, learned from the neighbors that she was not visiting, that there was no lecture nor meeting to detain her, and wonder passed into apprehension. Neighbors went into the adjacent woods and called, but received no answer. Every instant the awful shadow of some dread event solemnized the gathering groups. Every one thought what no one dared whisper, until a low

voice suggested "the river." Then, with the swiftness of certainty, all friends, far and near, were roused, and thronged along the banks of the stream. Torches flashed in boats that put off in the terrible search. Hawthorne, then living in the Old Manse, was summoned, and the man whom the villagers had only seen at morning as a musing spectre in his garden, now appeared among them at night to devote his strong arm and steady heart to their service. The boats drifted slowly down the stream — the torches flared strangely upon the black repose of the water, and upon the long, slim grasses that, weeping, fringed the marge. Upon both banks silent and awe-stricken crowds hastened along, eager and dreading to find the slightest trace of what they sought. Suddenly they came upon a few articles of dress, heavy with the night-dew. No one spoke, for no one had doubted the result. It was clear that Martha had strayed to the river, and quietly asked of its stillness the repose she sought. The boats gathered around the spot. With every implement that could be of service the melancholy search began. Long intervals of fearful silence ensued, but at length, toward midnight, the sweet face of the dead girl was raised more placidly to the stars than ever it had been to the sun.

"Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair, —
A tress o' golden hair,
O' drowned maiden's hair,
Above the nets at sea?
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes on Dee."

So ended a village tragedy. The reader may possibly

Concord, July 15th '52.

I passed by the Old Manse, a few days ago, for the first time in nearly seven years. Notwithstanding the repairs, it looked very much as of yore, except that a large window had been opened on the roof, through which light and cheerfulness probably shine into the dustiest part of the dim garret of my own time. The trees of the avenue — how many leaves have fallen since I last saw them! — had an aspect of melancholy, which disappointed me; either

Truly Yours,
Nath'l Hawthorne

find in it the original of the thrilling conclusion of the "Blithedale Romance," and learn anew that dark as is the thread with which Hawthorne weaves his spells, it is no darker than those with which tragedies are spun, even in regions apparently so torpid as Concord.

Daniel Webster.



WEBSTER.

THE life of Daniel Webster is too closely interwoven with the history of the last forty years to be made the subject of a sketch like the present. His name suggests important questions and events of great moment. A single glance at that stern brow and dark eye calls up names and recollections that thrill you. Calhoun and Adams and Randolph and Clay — a volume of such history as may never be written again — the passage of a great nation through one of the most difficult phases of its develop-

ment — earnest discussion in the Senate-house — toilsome investigations in the cabinet — eloquent appeals to the people — and all combined with untiring devotion to a laborious profession and occasional excursions into one of the most difficult fields of literature, — the hours of such a life would seem to have passed too gravely to have left room for lighter scenes and more genial tastes. But fortunately there are kindlier things in his nature, and qualities which bring him closer to the sympathies of common men. We have no partiality for heroes on pedestals. It was never meant that our necks should be strained out of all decency by this constant gazing upwards. Many a great man has been made so excessively great by his worshippers, that every trace of poor human nature has been obliterated, and nothing left but an unearthly compound, without a single particle of reality about it to show that it was originally made out of the same clay with ourselves. Even Washington has not escaped this senseless transformation; and though no man could laugh more heartily, his biographers seem to feel that they have made a dangerous concession when they allow that he was occasionally known to smile. No wonder that biography should be so cold, when the chief labor of those who write it seems to be to prove that their heroes were either angels, or demigods, or demons, or any thing but men. For the present, at least, we have no temptation to follow their example; for the only part of Webster's biography which we shall attempt to give with any thing like detail, is his childhood and early youth.

The house in which he was born was one of those one-story farmhouses, with its single chimney in the centre of a

sharp roof, a front door standing stiffly between two narrow front windows, receiving most of its light from the sides, and having all its good rooms on the ground floor, which are fresh in the memory of every body that has ever rode a mile in New England.* A giant elm spread its protecting branches over the shingle-roof, and directly in front, one of those limpid little streams, which give such freshness to a landscape, ran prattling by the wayside. A rustic bridge connected the two banks, and a high hill crowned with a country church, closed the landscape in this direction. To the southwest there was a still wider range for the eye, which at the period of his infancy, ran over a broad expanse of woodland and imperfect clearings, till it rested, at last, on the swelling outlines of the Kearsage.

Hard by the house itself, was the log-cabin in which his elder brothers and sisters were born, and which his father, a soldier of the old French war, had built in the heart of the forest. The new house, for a frame-house was something in those days, was built on the occasion of his father's second marriage. We should add, perhaps, for topographical accuracy, that it was situated in the town of Salisbury, Merrimac county, New Hampshire.

Here, then, while the forest still lay close around, and the traces of the dangers and hardships of border life were fresh at every step, Daniel Webster first saw the light, a feeble and sickly child, on the 18th of January, 1782, the last year of

* For the engraving on the preceding page, the only authentic view of Mr. Webster's birth-place, we are indebted to the courtesy of Charles Lanman Esq., who made the drawing on the spot, and to whom we are also indebted for several of the facts and anecdotes in our article.

the revolutionary war. His feebleness seemed to mark him out from the first as unfit for the rough life that it might be his lot to lead, and gave him additional claims to the tender watchfulness of his mother. She taught him to read, and, thanks to her care, one of the first volumes with which he became acquainted was the Bible. From the lessons of his mother he soon passed to the village school, a log-house, about half a mile from his father's, open only in winter, when farmers' boys had nothing to do at home, and could be spared to lay those rude foundations, on which so many a brilliant superstructure has been reared. The days were short, and starting early in the morning, with his books in one hand and the little tin pail that held his dinner in the other, he had the whole of his "noontimes" for play, and a walk home again through the snow to his supper.

But unfortunately the school was migratory — sometimes so far off that he was glad when the blacksmith's or the mill happened to lie in the same direction, and he could get an occasional lift on his way. Sometimes, too, it was altogether out of the reach of a morning and evening's walk in that rough season, and then he was put with some neighbor to board.

In a dark glen in the midst of the forest, and not far from the house, his father had built a saw-mill, which helped him to eke out his income, without interfering materially with his other duties. In the intervals of school-going, Daniel, who was not yet strong enough for heavier tasks, was his chief assistant at the mill. There was the gate to raise and the log to set, and then, for the next fifteen or twenty minutes, his time was his own. Happily his love of reading

was already awakened, and happily, too, his intelligent and judicious mother had turned it in the best direction. History and biography were his favorite books, and while the saw was dividing some veteran of the forest into planks, which, for all that we know to the contrary, may yet be standing amid the wood-work of the Capitol, his young mind was laying up treasures, to which it still clings with the tenacity of early and happy associations.

He had already formed another taste, too, to which he has always held fast through life. One spring day, when he was about five years old, he happened to be riding behind his father on a road that led them by a brook. "Dan," said the old gentleman, "how would you like to catch a trout?" There could be no doubt about the answer, and in a few moments the barefooted stripling was furnished with a hazel-rod from the roadside, a hook and string from his father's pocket, and creeping up along a rock that lay on the margin of a deep pool, he threw it, as he was bid, into the opposite side, and soon found that he had hooked a large trout. Whether from inexperience or eagerness, or the sudden burst of joy at this first development of a passion which, if nature ever planted any thing in the human mind, she had surely planted in his, it might perhaps be difficult to say; but whichever it was, the young angler lost his balance and tumbled headlong into the water. The ducking must have been a cold one for a puny boy at that season and in that climate, but still he stuck manfully to his prize, and when his father pulled him out, it was with the rod in his hand and the fish dangling at the end.

Some thirty years afterwards, and when he had already

served his native state with distinction, as a representative to Congress, he found himself for about ten days a member of the Legislature of Massachusetts. Anxious to bear his part in the promotion of the public welfare, and finding all the more obvious topics already taken up, he introduced a bill, which is still a law in the state, and which forbids, under pains and penalties, the taking of trout in any other way but the old one of hook and line. With what a fine effect might these two anecdotes be drawn together, if we only had the pen of an Irving to do it with.

It may well be supposed that with a strong passion for reading, his father's books were soon exhausted. District libraries were not yet known; but two or three gentlemen who knew the value of books, had already exerted themselves to form a circulating library in the village of Salisbury, and from this a new, though not always an abundant supply, could be obtained. Among his early favorites was the Spectator, which has sown so much good seed in so many minds that would have been closed to any other form of instruction. Mr. Webster still speaks of the delight with which he first read "Chevy Chase," turning over the pages of the criticism to follow the poem connectedly, and wondering much that Addison should have been put to such pains to prove that the story was a good one. Hudibras also soon became a special favorite, without interfering with his enjoyment of Pope's Homer, and what in this connection may seem somewhat strange, the "Essay on Man." So strong, indeed, was the hold which this last took upon his mind that he learnt the whole of it by heart, and still, it is said, can repeat it word for word. Another

of his early favorites was Watts' Psalms and Hymns, which took their place in his memory by the side of Pope and other fruits of his miscellaneous reading. The Bible, as we have already said, had been put into his hands very early, and he soon could read it with great solemnity and effect. When he was only seven years old, his father kept a public house, and it was a standing saying of teamsters, as they stopped at the door, "Come, let's go in and have a psalm from Dan Webster." We err greatly if much of that clearness of style and purity of language which distinguish Webster's speeches and writings, be not owing to his early familiarity with these models of pure and genuine English.

At fourteen he was sent to Philips' Academy, Exeter. It was a new world for him — new faces, new scenes, and new duties. His progress for his opportunities had been good, but in a school of an order so much higher than any thing he had ever seen before, it could carry him no further than the foot of the lowest class. The boys, too, laughed at him, and called him a backwoodsman. It was mortifying, and if he had not been lucky enough to find some judicious friends to listen to his grievances, and give him that countenance and encouragement, for the lack of which so many rich minds have failed to produce their fruit, might even have discouraged him. The usher, Mr. Nicholas Emery, who has lived to witness the confirmation of his early judgment, was foremost in this kind office, assuring him that if he would only make a good use of his time, all would come out right in the end. The young scholar believed him, and labored assiduously at his tasks. The end of the month came round; the class were ranged in a line:

and the tutor, scarcely less gratified, perhaps, than his obedient pupil, took him formally by the arm, and leading him along the front, placed him with his own hand at the head of the class. It was the first step, and the boy's ambition was roused. The next term's studies were followed up still more closely, and the summing up looked for with no little anxiety, for there were rivals to contend with, of whose merit he was fully aware. The first words were doubtful — "Daniel Webster, gather up your books and take down your cap." "They are going to expel me from school," was the hasty thought of the poor boy, as he obeyed the command, and then waited with sore misgivings for what was to follow. "Now sir," resumed the kind-hearted tutor, "you will please report yourself to the teacher of the first class; and you, young gentlemen, will take an affectionate leave of your classmate, for you will never see him again."

But although he was perfectly successful in all his other studies, he found a sad stumbling-block in the weekly exercise of declamation. Not that his memory failed him, for he learnt by heart easily, and never forgot what he had once learned. But he could not make up his mind to stand out before the school and speak when every body's eye was upon him. Buckminster, whose early death is still remembered with pain, did and said every thing that he could to persuade him — "try once — only try." The tutors frowned and laughed; but it was all in vain. He could neither be laughed nor frowned out of his timidity, and finally, we believe, left school without once having ventured to take the first step in the art which was to become the daily exercise of his life.

It was a misfortune that he was not able to complete his studies at this excellent institution. He had completed his course of English grammar, made good progress in his other English studies, and begun his Latin. But after a few months his father was obliged to take him away. His progress, however, had been such as to awaken the fondest hopes, and great as the effort was, it was decided that he should be sent to college. This is a common word now, and we can scarcely form a conception of the ideas that it conveyed to the mind of a farmer's boy of sixty years ago. It was to open his way to the university that poor Kirke White published his sweet little poem of Clifton Grove, and to prove his appreciation of its advantages that he tortured himself with mathematics after he got there. There was no such way for Webster, of pushing himself forward over that difficult first step, and a college course was a mine of wisdom which he had never dared to think of as within his reach. But his father's decision was already taken. At the neighboring town of Boscawen there was a clergyman of the name of Wood, fully qualified to teach Latin and Greek enough to carry a boy of those days to the college door, and who had agreed to board and teach young Webster for a dollar a week. In February of '97, father and son set out upon their journey, and it was now that Daniel first learnt how generously his father was prepared to deal by him. "I remember," says he, "the very hill which we were ascending, through deep snows, in a New England sleigh, when my father made known his purpose to me. I could not speak. How could he, I thought, with so large a family and in such narrow circumstances, think of incurring so great an expense for me?

A warm glow ran all over me, and I laid my head on my father's shoulder and wept."

He now had a fixed object in view and studied hard. He made rapid progress in his Latin, read Virgil and Cicero, and though far from laying that critical foundation which can now be laid by a willing scholar, went far enough to form a taste for the great Roman orator which he has never lost. Still two of his early tastes stuck by him — general reading, and his rod and line. His task was never neglected; but he would still be ranging the hills for game, and seeking out the tufted banks and deep pools, the favorite haunt of the trout. Mr. Wood would sometimes shake his head and look grave; but the lesson was always ready, and what more could he ask? On one occasion, after a reprimand for this love of the hills and streams, the old gentleman, who was to be absent the next morning, gave his pupil a hundred lines in Virgil for his task. Daniel set up all night, got five hundred lines instead of a hundred, and secured the whole of the next day for his favorite sport. Here too he first read Don Quixotte. "I began to read it," he has been heard to say, "and it is literally true that I never closed my eyes till I had finished it; nor did I lay it down any time for five minutes, so great was the power of this extraordinary book on my imagination." When he first met Shakspeare we have never heard; but it is well known that few writers have exercised a more powerful influence over him.

In August he entered Dartmouth College, and set himself to his task manfully. His superiority was soon felt and acknowledged; but with it there were a genial temper and social habits which took away the bitterness of rivalry, and

gave him the same strong hold upon the affections of his companions that he had upon their esteem. His views and ambitions extended with the field. He took part in the publication of a weekly paper, furnishing selections from his own reading, and occasionally an editorial from his pen. By resolute will he overcame his dread of public speaking, and delivered several addresses before college societies, some of which were published. He read extensively,—choosing among the best historians and poets, and laying that groundwork of general literature, without which the best mind contracts and dries up in the mere routine of professional life. His time, however, was not altogether his own. He well knew that the expense of his education was one that his father could illy bear, and he was resolved from the first to do all that he could to lighten the burthen. Then as now, the chief resource of poor students was in school-teaching during the long winter vacations, and Webster, like so many others of our great men, who began the world with all its thorns and stumbling-blocks in their path, had to help himself along by teaching a country school.

He was still in his Sophomore year when he formed the plan of securing for his brother Ezekiel, to whom he was fondly attached, the same advantages which he was enjoying. When at home the two boys slept together, and the whole night, on a vacation visit, was devoted to a discussion of all the difficulties and doubts and hopes of this brotherly conception. The next morning it was submitted to their father, who was ever willing and ready to do all and even more than he could afford to do for his children, and the result of the family council was, that Ezekiel too should

have a college education. He was immediately sent to begin his Latin, and entered Dartmouth in the spring of the year in which his brother graduated.

Successful as Webster's college course was, he did not gain the first honors of his class. A rival whose name has long been forgotten, received the "Valedictory," and the disappointed candidate, assembling a portion of his classmates on the green behind the college, tore up his diploma in their presence, and casting the fragments into the air, cried out in a voice that was soon to be a familiar tone in the high places of the land, "My industry may make me a great man, but this miserable parchment cannot." It would be a curious inquiry, for one who had the time, why the valedictorians and salutatorians of our colleges are so seldom heard of in after life. There must be a cause, and whether it lie in the individual or the system, it is well worth the attention of a philosophic mind.

He had already chosen his profession, and immediately entered the office of Mr. Thompson, of Salisbury, as a student of law. Mr. T. was a lawyer of the old school — a man of talent and respectable acquirements, but unskilled in the art of smoothing the entrance into a difficult science. Coke, with his abstract propositions and nice distinctions, was the first author that he put into the hands of his students — a very good way, it may be, of making the rest of their course easy, but a sure one of breaking the spirits of any but the most resolute. Happily for Mr. Webster, the necessity of providing for his own and his brother's expenses relieved him for a time from this unwelcome drudgery. In January he was invited to take charge of a large school at Fryeburg,

in Maine, with a salary of three hundred and fifty dollars a year. The offer was joyfully accepted, and he soon found himself installed in his new dignity, with two afternoons in the week and all his evenings at his command. To make the most of his salary he undertook to act as assistant to the register of deeds of the county, where two large volumes in a neat handwriting still remain to bear witness to his industry. This, at the rate of twenty-five cents a deed, brought him enough for his current expenses, and enabled him to lay up the whole of his salary.

Fryeburg, like Salisbury, had its circulating library, which supplied him with the materials for many a pleasant and profitable hour. His only recreation was trouting, and on his holiday afternoons — Wednesday and Saturday — he might always be found on the banks of some brook, with his fishing-rod and his Shakspeare. One circumstance alone would have been sufficient to give Fryeburg a pleasant hold upon his memory, for it was here that he first found a copy of Blackstone, and opened for himself a far more cheerful pathway into his science than that which his instructor had marked out for him. The only record of his personal appearance at this period is contained in his own description of himself — "Long, slender, pale, and all eyes." "Indeed," says he, "I went by the name of *all eyes* the country round."

But satisfactory as his situation was in a pecuniary view, he was too anxious to push on in his profession to remain there any longer than his immediate wants required. Accordingly, after eight months of teaching, and with a warm expression of the satisfaction of his employers in his pocket,

he returned to Mr. Thompson's office and resumed the study of the law.

He came back with a wider range of reading and a better knowledge of what he was to do in order to make himself a lawyer. He had read Blackstone, and now he laid Coke aside, and gave his attention to works better suited to his progress and his wants. He continued his studies of the English and Latin classics, giving a special attention to history, and carrying his Latin beyond the common range by reading in that language the whole of Puffendorff's History of England. Cicero continued to be a special favorite, and as he turned again and again the eloquent pages, and felt that each new perusal carried him deeper into the beauties of his author, he might have applied to himself the precept of Quintilian, and estimated his own progress by his increased appreciation of the great model of Latin eloquence. He now added Cæsar, Sallust and Horace to his list of classics — for his College reading had done but little more than give him a first relish of their beauties. Written translation, that best teacher of style, became an occasional if not a regular exercise, and several of his translations from Horace were so successful that they were published. What a lesson for our young lawyers, who, with all the advantages of our improved methods of classical instruction, throw away their classics even before they get their diplomas, and scarcely go farther in the literature of their own language than the best novel or an article in their Quarterly.

After eighteen months at Salisbury, Webster went to Boston, and after unsuccessful application at several offices was admitted into that of Mr. Gore, a happy circumstance

for both, for it gave the student the friendship and advice of a man who knew how to appreciate him, and to the instructor the pleasure of doing much towards the formation of a fresh and vigorous mind. It may well be supposed that if he had been industrious before, he was doubly so now. Mr. Gore was not merely a lawyer, but an eminent statesman, deeply read in books and men. Under his direction the young student entered boldly into the broadest paths of his science. He read the best works upon common, municipal and international law; he followed up the sittings of the Supreme Court, reporting all its decisions, as well as those of the Circuit Court of the United States, which was soon to become the field of his most brilliant efforts. But his favorite study was the common law, and more particularly the department of special pleading. Bacon, Viner, and the common treatises were not sufficient to satisfy his longings for a thorough mastery of this beautiful and ingenious subject. He read Saunders in the old folio, abstracting and translating the pleadings from the Latin and Norman French — an exercise which has left deep traces behind it in the clear and ready analysis, which forms one of the prominent characteristics of his writings. Now, too, he had other books at his command, and could continue his miscellaneous reading upon a broader scale. Fortunately his taste had been too well formed to allow him to waste his time. History and poetry were his favorite resources, and it may well be supposed that he never let any occasion slip by him of studying the best specimens of forensic and parliamentary eloquence. He himself has recorded the

delight with which he read the great speech of Fisher Ames on the British treaty.

We have alluded to Mr. Gore's appreciation of his pupil It was a happy thing for our country that he did. Mr. Webster's father had been for several years an associate justice of the court of common pleas, and the clerkship of the court, a place of fifteen hundred dollars a year, falling vacant, and being offered to him for his son, he felt that the young man's fortune was made, and immediately wrote to him to communicate the happy tidings. Nothing but the earnest remonstrances of Mr. Gore prevented him from accepting it and condemning himself for life to a toilsome and uncongenial drudgery.

In March, 1805, he was admitted to the Suffolk bar. Mr. Gore presented him to the judges, and according to the custom of the times, prefaced the motion for his admission by an encomium upon the new candidate. The young lawyer then returned to his native state, and to be near his family, opened an office at Boscawen, which after two years he gave up to his brother and removed to Portsmouth. Here, among many other eminent men, he had for friends and associates at the bar Joseph Story and Jeremiah Mason. The next five years were devoted to the practice of his profession, in which he immediately took his place among the first men of the state. In 1812 he was elected to the House of Representatives, and his history, from that day, becomes a part of the legal and civil and literary history of his country.

It is evident from what we have said, that Mr. Webster must have been a very industrious man. He is no believer

in that absurd doctrine of the spontaneous development of genius, which has proved the ruin of so many clever men. His knowledge has been the result of hard work. His habits of close reasoning were won by careful discipline. He learnt the art of arranging his own thoughts by patient analysis of the thoughts of others. His language, always vigorous, direct and pure, was drawn from daily and nightly study of the great writers of English literature. Illustrations, which seem to rise so spontaneously from the subject, are the fruits of extensive reading and close observation. His tenacious memory was carefully cultivated in youth, and the learning by rote, which so many reject as unworthy of their genius, was one of his favorite exercises. Gibbon prided himself not a little upon being able to repeat, in his old age, an ode of Voltaire's, which he had not seen since he was a young man; and wonderful things are told of Macaulay's feats of memory. Webster learnt the "Essay on Man" in his childhood, and though he has not looked at it since he was fifteen, can still recite the greater part of it without hesitating. It is one of the secrets of Mr. Webster's success, that he has held on tenaciously to his early acquisitions. The Latin that he learnt at college was made the basis of careful subsequent study, and Cicero continues to be his favorite author to the present day.

Mr. Webster has always been an early riser. Like Scott, he has done the greater part of his work "in the morning." Before others are stirring, he may be seen on his way to market, purchasing his day's dinner or busily talking with the marketmen from the country, whose conversation he loves. Then comes his correspondence and the morning

paper, and when he seats himself at the breakfast-table, the day's work of a common man is already done.

Fishing is still his favorite amusement, and he is never so happy as when he can escape for a few days from the toils of office, and indulge himself with his hook and line. Here again the habits of a thoughtful mind are ever breaking forth. He has made himself familiar with the ways of the little animals that have afforded him so much sport, and made many observations upon them that would add a curious and valuable chapter to natural history. It was while trouting on the Marshpee brook that he planned out his Bunker Hill address, and the "venerable men" who first listened to one of its most eloquent passages, are said to have been a couple of trout of uncommon size and beauty. All men have their favorite hours and modes of composing, the comparison of which would form not only an amusing chapter, but a valuable commentary upon that doctrine of idiosyncracies which some eminent men are so much attached to. Adam Smith always dictated to an amanuensis, walking up and down the room. Hume ran off his flowing periods comfortably pillowed on a sofa. Burke wrote in a little room with bare walls. Schiller and Buffon in summer-houses at the end of their gardens; and Johnson used to assert with his dictatorial positiveness, that a man could write just as well at one time or in one place as another. We do not know that Mr. Webster has any particular theory upon the subject, but his practice is decidedly in favor of the open air. His great plea in the Dartmouth College case was arranged on an excursion from Boston to Barnstable. The speech which he puts into the mouth of John

Adams in his Eulogy on Adams and Jefferson, and which has puzzled so many novices in history, was composed while riding in a New England chaise. And indeed, whether riding, or hunting, or fishing, his mind seems always to have been busy, and doubtless with him, as with every body else who has written much, many a thought has dropped from his pen in the retirement of his closet, which had its birth in the sunlight, amid green fields and laughing streams.

Mr. Webster's favorite resorts in his occasional escapes from business, are his farms. The "Elms farm," in New Hampshire, about three miles from his birth-place, and on which he passed several years of his childhood, is a broad tract of a thousand acres, lying in a bend of the Merrimac, within sight of the White Mountains. This is chiefly valuable as a grazing farm.

Marshfield is in Plymouth county, Massachusetts, about thirty miles from Boston. It contains two thousand acres of land in high cultivation, with two or three dozen buildings of various kinds, a flower-garden covering an acre and filled with a rich variety of native plants, an old orchard of some three hundred trees, a new one of a thousand, forest trees of every kind, a hundred thousand of which have grown from seed of his own planting, and the whole intersected with roads and avenues and gravelled walks, and shady paths, which lead you onward through such a variety of charming vistas and scenes, that foot and eye never grow weary of tracing the grateful succession. Near the house are three little lakes of fresh water — two of them the favorite resort of tribes of ducks and geese, and one, the largest of all, with little sedgy islands scattered over its

surface, the exclusive domain of a large flock of wild geese, which, after many trials, Mr. Webster succeeded in taming down to a fixed home. To complete the landscape, we must add "an immense expanse of marsh land, veined with silver streams, dotted with islands of unbroken forest, skirted with a far-reaching beach, and bounded by the blue ocean."

With the engraving to tell the whole story at a glance, it would be but a waste of paper to attempt to describe the house. We will only add that it stands upon the summit of a grassy lawn, under the shadow of an elm tree, with nine rooms on the ground floor, and is ornamented with pictures, engravings, statuary, and every variety of curiosities. The west room is a Gothic library, built from the design of the late Mrs. Appleton. The whole of Mr. Webster's books, however, are not here. The law library is at Boston, and the library of natural history and agriculture, in the farm-office at the end of the garden. The entire collection is valued at forty thousand dollars.

Mr. Webster's arrival at his farms is a signal of gatherings and congratulatory visits from his neighbors, all of whom come to take him by the hand and express their deep interest in his welfare. The fisherman knows that he will have work enough for every day, and an early start to begin with. The farmer comes in with his reports, and then there is the round among the cattle, of which he is a perfect judge, and an examination of the fields and the progress of the crop, for he is a skilful farmer, loving not only the sight of cornfields and the odor of new-mown grass, but the details of planting and manuring, and all the processes of agriculture. He first taught the Marshfield farmers



the value of kelp and sea-weed, and some of his neighbors say that they could well afford to give him five tons of hay a year for the lesson. It is pleasant to think of a great man in such a spot — with the scenes he loves best around him, and friends who know his worth. It is pleasant to think that the wearied mind can still find refreshment in the simple and genial pursuits of rural life, and that the cares and excitements of the great scenes in which so large a portion of his career has been passed, have not with him, as they have with so many others, destroyed the relish for the calm and sweet companionship of nature and of books. Long may he live to enjoy it.

Scarcely is the wish uttered ere Death makes its fulfilment impossible. On Sunday, the 23d of October, 1852, the electric nerves of the land thrilled to their utmost extremity with the shock of the death of Daniel Webster. He died on the morning of that day, a pathetic grandeur marking his last moments, not inconsonant with his character and career. Henceforth the pleasant home which we have been describing is no longer the residence of Genius, but the shrine of a national reverence and admiration. And the future pilgrims from Maine to Mexico, wandering, thoughtful, through the chambers and over the grounds of Marshfield, will, by the strength and permanence of the charm that attracts them, attest the truth of Webster's self-uttered epitaph — "I still live."

"He recognizes the principles of Representative Government, he bows to the will of the majority, & he acknowledges the supremacy of Law. Hence it is, that wherever Americans assemble, in numbers, they have public men, Legislators, & persons fit for judicial & Executive Administration. Behold the Unity of California!

Dan[l] Webster. From the Address at the foundation of the Addition to the Capitol, July 4. 1851.

John Pendleton Kennedy.



KENNEDY.

THE popular idea of an author's home is a room in a garret, furnished with a hungry-looking wife, a baby in a cradle, a dun at the door, and the author writing, at a broken-legged table, an epic poem, or an essay on gold mines. But this, like many other of our popular ideas, is an importation from Grub-street; which happens to be almost the only "institution" that we have not endeavored to copy from our English ancestors. Grub-street, happily, is only a tradition among American authors, who, like all other Americans, have the faculty of earning their own living, and, when they fail to do it by authorship, are not too dull to accomplish it in some other way. The present volume will be likely to dispel the traditionary idea of an author's home, or at least of the home of an American author. It is not a great many years ago since Sydney Smith made that impudent inquiry in the Edinburgh Review, which so lacerated our national pride, "Who reads an American book?" and here we present our countrymen,

and the rest of the reading world, with a volume made up exclusively of descriptions of the homes of American authors, and have materials in reserve for two more volumes of equal bulk on the same subject. The author of Horse Shoe Robinson is a good type of an American author. Seeing that authorship did not hold out that prospect of independence, in pecuniary matters, which every American regards as essential to personal integrity and dignity of character, like the author of Waverley, he first devoted himself to the great business of securing a sufficient income by the exercise of his talents in an honorable profession, before he ventured on the indulgence of his literary inclinations; and we are not sure that the world has not gained by this commendable prudence, as well as the author. His works have not been forced from him by the exactions of publishers, nor the pressing necessities of an improvident life. But they have been written from a fulness of a well-disciplined imagination, and a well-matured and thoroughly educated mind. Therefore the first production of Mr. Kennedy made its mark. It was a finished and artistic work, betraying neither haste, incompleteness, nor inexperience; and as the author had not neglected his opportunities, he had no reason to complain of neglect when he appeared before the public as a candidate for their attention. It would be well for our national literature if our young authors were to profit by the manly example of the author of Swallow Barn and Horse Shoe Robinson, who commenced his career as an author at an age when many of our writers have exhausted themselves and become effete. Scott was forty years of age when

Waverly was published, and the author of Swallow Barn was but three years younger when he made his first essay in the same field of literary labor.

The "home" of Mr. Kennedy, which our engraving gives a view of, is a pleasant but unpretending country house, built directly on the left bank of the Patapscot river, about one mile below Ellicott's Mills, with a bridge leading across the river to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. It is encompassed with lofty and romantic hills, being at the foot of the noted highlands in Maryland known as the Elk Ridge. The house is more extensive than the view of it indicates; the older part of it is of frame, but the other part is built of granite. It has been in the possession of the father-in-law of Mr. Kennedy more than thirty years, and he has himself occupied it as a summer residence during the past twenty years; and here the greater part of his published works were written.

Mr. Kennedy was born in the city of Baltimore on the 25th of October, 1795; he was the oldest of four brothers, his father being at the time of his birth a prosperous merchant in that city, and his mother of the Pendleton family of Virginia. He was educated at the Baltimore University, and graduated at that institution in 1812, and bore arms in the defence of his country at Bladensburgh and North Point, when Maryland was invaded by the British troops under General Ross. He was admitted to the bar in his native city in the year 1816, and practised law with great success until he was elected a representative to Congress from Baltimore. Mr. Kennedy has always been a politician, since he entered upon the active scenes of life, and has achieved a

triple reputation as a lawyer, an author, and a statesman. Although nearly all our authors have been lawyers, and all our lawyers politicians, there is no other instance that we can recall to mind, in which eminence has been attained in all three callings, by the same individual.

The first literary adventure of the author of Swallow Barn was the Red Book, a satirical publication, which he produced in partnership with his friend Peter Hoffman Cruse, in imitation of the literary partnership of Irving and Paulding, in the production of Salmagundi. Irving appears to have been the model on which Mr. Kennedy formed himself in his first literary attempts; for his next work, Swallow Barn, which was published in 1832, was manifestly written with Bracebridge Hall in its author's memory.

The vigorous genius of Mr. Kennedy needed no model for his imitation; Swallow Barn was, in all its essentials, as original a production as Bracebridge Hall, and the author had the advantage of depicting scenes and characters that were then entirely new in the province of art. He is entitled to the merit of a discoverer, and the new field which he opened to literary adventurers has since been most assiduously cultivated. But Swallow Barn still remains the best work of its kind that has emanated from an American pen. Its pictures of plantation life in Virginia, not having been written for sectional or partisan purposes, are the most amusing and reliable that have been presented to us. They impress the northern reader with a feeling of their faithfulness, and have nothing of the extravagancies and distortions which other writers on the same ground appear to have found it impossible to avoid. Two years after the

publication of Swallow Barn, his great romance of Horse Shoe Robinson appeared, and in this stirring tale of Revolutionary adventures in the South, he asserted his own originality of composition, and wrote without any other model than that of Nature. Rob of the Bowl, a Legend of St. Inigoe's, appeared in 1838; and although the author appears to have bestowed more care upon it than upon either of his other productions, it was not so successful as his two previous works. In 1840 he published, anonymously, a political satire, called the Annals of Quodlibet, which contained no small amount of wit and trenchant humor; but the most pungent satire is tame and spiritless in a country like ours, where the freedom, or licentiousness of the press permits the use of undisguised abuse in political warfare. And the Annals of Quodlibet did not make that kind of impression upon the public mind that a work of less merit would have done, if piquancy had been given to the perusal of it by the feeling which the pen of the author imparts to satirical publications in other countries. The satire, too, was local, and not likely to be understood in another latitude than that in which it was produced.

In 1849 was published Mr. Kennedy's Life of Wirt, in two volumes, a work which will add to the reputation of both the author and his subject. This was the last of his published productions.

The political life of Mr. Kennedy commenced at a very early age. He was elected a member of the Maryland House of Delegates to represent his native city in the year 1820, and in the two succeeding years. He was three times elected a member of Congress, and always

distinguished himself by his eloquent, manly and consistent advocacy of the leading measures of the Whigs, of which party he has always been a devoted member. In 1844 he published a defence of the Whigs, a political essay displaying great talent, vigor of reasoning, and a perfect mastery of his subject.

On the resignation of the post of Secretary of the Navy by Mr. Graham, in consequence of his nomination to the Vice-Presidency by the Whigs, Mr. Fillmore offered the vacant place to Mr. Kennedy, which he now fills to the great satisfaction of his party and the people. It is a remarkable circumstance, that the only literary men who have had a seat in the Cabinet—Bancroft, Paulding and Kennedy, should have all three been called to the head of the same department.

The Story of
Rose Shot Robinson was first published in
1835 — and after running through several
editions, gave its place to younger aspirants
for public favour; and, like an old politician,
hedimmed and battered by devices
attend to the shades of private life, a ~~battered~~
~~and used up hedimmed and battered devisser of~~
~~that well known region & which is supposed~~
~~by them~~. There is a region, though yet undiscovered,
which popular belief has assigned to old donkeys
and post boys — for neither of them have ever
been known to die — and to which, also, we

Fenn, Jr. Preface to 'Rose-Shot Robinson' revised ed. 1851

James Russell Lowell.



LOWELL.

CAMBRIDGE is one of the very few towns in New England that is worth visiting for the sake of its old houses. It has its full share of turreted and bedomed cottages, of "pie-crust battlements" and Athenian temples; but its chief glory, besides its elms, and "muses' factories," are the fine old wooden mansions, which seem to be indigenous to the soil on which they stand, like the stately trees that surround them. These well preserved relics of our ante-revolutionary splendor are not calculated to make us feel proud of our advancement in architectural taste, since we achieved our independence; and we cannot help thinking that men who are fond of building make-believe baronial castles, never could have had the spirit to dream of asserting their independence of the old world. People who are afraid to trust their own invention in so simple a thing as house-building, could never have trusted themselves in the more important business of government-making. Yet some of these fine old houses, that have so manly and independ-

ent a look, were built by stanch, conservative tories, who feared republicanism, and had no faith at all in the possibility of a state without a king.

The stately old mansion in which the poet Lowell was born, one of the finest in the neighborhood of Boston, was built by Thomas Oliver, the last royal lieutenant-governor of the province of Massachusetts, who remained true to his allegiance, and after the Declaration of Independence removed to England, where he died. In Eliot's Biographical Dictionary of the first settlers in New England, is the following brief account of this sturdy royalist: —

"Thomas Oliver, the last lieutenant-governor under the crown. He was a man of letters, and possessed of much good nature and good breeding; he was affable, courteous, a complete gentleman in his manners, and the delight of his acquaintance. He was graduated at Harvard College in 1753. He built an elegant mansion in Cambridge, and enjoyed a plentiful fortune. When he left America it was with extreme regret. He lived in the shades of retirement while in Europe, and very lately (1809) his death was announced in the public papers."

The character of the man might easily have been told from examining his house; it bears the marks of a generous and amiable nature, as unerringly as such qualities are denoted by the shape of the head. Mean men do not build themselves such habitations. Much good nature is plainly traceable in its fine large rooms, and its capacious chimneys, which might well be called

"The wind-pipes of good hospitalitie."

It has a broad staircase with easy landings, and a hall wide enough for a traditionary duel to have been fought in it, when, like many of the neighboring mansions, it was occupied by revolutionary soldiers. Washington, too, was once entertained under its roof, and after the war it became the property of Elbridge Gerry, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, who lived in it while he was Vice-President of the United States. At his death it was purchased of the widow of Gerry by its present owner, the Rev. Charles Lowell, father of the Poet, by whom it was beautified and improved. Dr. Lowell planted the greater part of the noble trees which now surround it, conspicuous among them being the superb elms from which it derives its name. The grounds of Elmwood are about thirteen acres in extent, and adjoin on one side the cemetery of Mount Auburn, where two of the Poet's children, Blanche and Rose, are buried. It was on the grave of his first-born that the beautiful poem, full of gushing tenderness, called "The First Snow-fall," was written; which we will copy here, because it has not been included in either of the editions of his collected poems.

"The snow had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.

"Every pine and fir and hemlock
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
And the poorest twig on the elm-tree
Was ridged inch-deep with pearl.

"From sheds, new-roofed with Carrara,
Came chanticleer's muffled crow,
The stiff rails were softened to swan's-down, —
And still fluttered down the snow.

"I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snow-birds
Like brown leaves whirling by.

"I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn
Where a little headstone stood,
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

"Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, 'Father, who makes it snow?'
And I told of the good Allfather
Who cares for us all below.

"Again I looked at the snowfall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,
When that mound was heaped so high.

"I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar of that deep-stabbed woe.

"And again to the child I whispered,
'The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall!'

"Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her,
And she, kissing back, could not know
That *my* kiss was given to her sister
Folded close under deepening snow."

Some of Lowell's finest poems have trees for their themes, and he appears to entertain a strong affection for the leafy patriarchs beneath whose branches he had played in his boyhood. In one of the many poems which have overflowed from his prodigal genius into the columns of obscure monthly and weekly periodicals, and have not yet been published in a volume, is one called "A Day in June," in which occurs an exquisitely touching apostrophe to the "tall elm" that forms so conspicuous an object in the view of Elmwood drawn by our artist.

"Snap, chord of manhood's tenser strain!
To-day I will be a boy again;
The mind's pursuing element,
Like a bow slackened and unbent,
In some dark corner shall be leant;
The robin sings, as of old, from the limb,
The cat-bird crows in the lilac bush;
Through the dim arbor, himself more dim,
Silently hops the hermit-thrush,
The withered leaves keep dumb for him;
The irreverent buccaneering bee
Hath stormed and rifled the nunnery
Of the lily, and scattered the sacred floor
With haste-dropt gold from shrine to door;
There, as of yore,
The rich milk-tinging butter-cup,
Its tiny polished urn holds up,
Filled with ripe summer to the edge,
The sun in his own wine to pledge;
And one tall elm, this hundredth year
Doge of our leafy Venice here,
Who with an annual ring doth wed
The blue Adriatic over head,

Shadows with his palatial mass
The deep canals of flowing grass,
Where glow the dandelions sparse
For shadows of Italian stars.

"O, unestranged birds and bees!
O, face of nature always true!
O, never unsympathizing trees!
O, never-rejecting roof of blue,
Whose rash disherison never falls
On us unthinking prodigals,
Yet who convictest all our ill,
So grand and unappeasable!
Methinks my heart from each of these,
Plucks part of childhood back again,
Long there imprisoned, as the breeze
Doth every hidden odor seize
Of wood and water, hill and plain;
And I will store the secret rite,
For days less generously bright,
As Cereus hoards from noontide skies
The fiery forces to bloom at night."

He has studied in the life-school of poetry, and all the pictures which he has woven into the texture of his verse have been drawn directly from nature. His descriptions of scenery are full of local coloring, and, in his "Indian-Summer Reverie," there are so many accurate and vivid pictures of Elmwood and its neighborhood, of the "silver Charles," the meadows, the trees, the distant hills, the colleges, the "glimmering farms," and "Coptic tombs," that we need hardly do more than transfer them to our pages to give a vivid picture of his home and its associations.

"There gleams my native village, dear to me,
Though higher change's waves each day are seen,
Whelming fields famed in boyhood's history,
Sanding with houses the diminished green;
There, in red brick, which softening time defies,
Stand square and stiff the Muses' factories; —
How with my life knit up in every well-known scene!

"Beyond that hillock's house-bespotted swell,
Where Gothic chapels house the horse and chaise,
Where quiet cits in Grecian temples dwell,
Where Coptic tombs resound with prayer and praise,
Where dust and mud the equal year divide,
There gentle Alston lived, and wrought, and died,
Transfiguring street and shop with his illumined gaze.

"*Virgilium vidi tantum*, — I have seen
But as a boy, who looks alike on all,
That misty hair, that fine Undine-like mien,
Tremulous as down to feeling's faintest call; —
Ah, dear old homestead! count it to thy fame
That hither many times the painter came —
One elm yet bears his name, a feathery tree and tall.

* * * *

"Dear native town! whose choking elms each year
With eddying dust before their time turn gray,
Pining for rain, — to me thy dust is dear;
It glorifies the eve of summer day,
And when the westering sun half-sunken burns
The mote-thick air to deepest orange turns,
The westward horseman rides through clouds of gold away

"So palpable, I've seen those unshorn few,
The six old willows at the causeway's end,
Such trees Paul Potter never dreamed nor drew,
Through this dry mist their checkering shadows send,

Striped, here and there, with many a long-drawn thread,
Where streamed through leafy chincks the trembling red,
Past which, in one bright trail, the hang-bird's flashes blend."

In this brilliant descriptive poem he exhibits his native town in a series of changing pictures that bring the scenes perfectly before us under all the varying phases of the year. What landscape painter has given us such pictures as these of the approaches of a New England winter?

"Or come when sunset gives its freshened zest,
Lean o'er the bridge and let the ruddy thrill,
While the shorn sun swells down the hazy west,
Glow opposite; — the marshes drink their fill
And swoon with purple veins, then slowly fade
Through pink to brown, as eastward moves the shade,
Lengthening with stealthy creep, of Simond's darkening hill.

"Later, and yet ere winter wholly shuts,
Ere through the first dry snow the runner grates,
And the loath cart-wheel screams in slippery ruts,
While firmer ice the eager boy awaits,
Trying each buckle and strap beside the fire,
And until bed-time plays with his desire,
Twenty times putting on and off his new-bought skates; —

"Then, every morn, the river's banks shine bright
With smooth plate-armor, treacherous and frail,
By the frost's clinking hammers forged at night,
'Gainst which the lances of the sun prevail,
Giving a pretty emblem of the day
When guiltier arms in light shall melt away,
And states shall move free-limbed, loosed from war's cramping mail."

He was born at Elmwood on the 22d of February, 1819—

the youngling of the flock, received his early education in Cambridge, and in 1838 graduated at Harvard, where his father and grandfather had graduated before him.

> "Though lightly prized the ribboned parchments three,
> Yet *collegisse juvat*, I am glad
> That here what colleging was mine I had, —
> It linked another tie, dear native town, with thee."
>
> INDIAN-SUMMER REVERIE.

After his "colleging" he studied law, and was admitted to the bar; but he had opened an office in Boston, to lure clients, a very little while, when he discovered that he and the legal profession were not designed for each other. There could not have been a more ungenial and unprofitable pursuit than that of the law for a nature so frank and generous as that of Lowell's; and, happily for him, necessity, which knows no law, did not compel him, as it has many others, to stick to the law, for a living, against his inclinations. So he abandoned all thoughts of the ermine, and of figuring in sheepskin volumes, if he had ever indulged in any such fancies, which is hardly probable, and, turning his back on a profession which is fitly typified by a woman with a bandage over her eyes, he returned to his books and trees at Elmwood, determined on making literature his reliance for fame and fortune.

His first start in literature, as a business, ended disastrously. In company with his friend Robert Carter, he established a monthly magazine called the "Pioneer," which, owing to the failure of his publishers, did not last longer than the third number; but it was admirably well

conducted, and made a decided impression on the literary public by the elevated tone of its criticisms, and the superiority of its essays to the ordinary class of magazine literature. Soon after the failure of the Pioneer he was married to Miss Maria White, of Watertown, a lady of congenial tastes, and as remarkable for her womanly graces and accomplishments, as for her elevated intellectual qualities. "The Morning Glory," published in the last edition of his poems, was written by her. They have resided at Elmwood since their marriage, with the exception of a year and a half spent in Italy.

The ancestors of Lowell were among the earliest and most eminent of the settlers of New England, and there are but few Americans who could boast of a more honorable or distinguished descent. He was named after his father's maternal grandfather, Judge James Russell, of Charlestown, an eminent person in the colony of Massachusetts, one of whose descendants, Lechmere Russell, a general in the British army, recently died at his seat of Ashford Hall in Shropshire. The founder of the Lowell family in Massachusetts was Percival Lowell, who settled in the town of Newbury in the year 1639. The Hon. John Lowell, the Poet's grandfather, was one of the most eminent lawyers in Massachusetts; he was a representative in Congress, and being a member of the convention which framed the first constitution of his native State, he introduced the provision into the Bill of Rights which abolished slavery in Massachusetts. The father of Mr. Lowell is a distinguished Congregationalist clergyman, who has been pastor of the West church of Boston nearly fifty years, and is the author of several works of

a religious character; he graduated at Harvard, and was an intimate friend and classmate of Washington Allston. He afterwards went to Edinburgh, where he studied divinity, and matriculated at the university there at the same time with Sir David Brewster, who was also a divinity student. A few years ago, when Dr. Lowell was in Scotland with his wife and daughter, he paid a visit to Melrose Abbey, and while there heard a man tell another that Sir David Brewster would be with him directly. He had not met the eminent philosopher since they were students together, and did not know that he was in the neighborhood of his old friend's house, which he learned, on inquiry, was the fact. When the philosopher appeared, Dr. Lowell made himself known, and found, from the heartiness of the embrace he received, that an interval of forty years had not diminished the attachment of his early friend and companion.

The mother of the Poet was a native of New Hampshire, and a sister of the late Captain Robert T. Spence, of the U. S. Navy. She was a woman of a remarkable mind, and possessed in an eminent degree the power of acquiring languages, a faculty which is inherited by her daughter, Mrs. Putnam, whose controversy with Mr. Bowen, editor of the North American Review, respecting the late war in Hungary, brought her name so prominently before the public that there can be no impropriety in alluding to her here. Mrs. Putnam is probably one of the most remarkable of female linguists, and there have been but few scholars whose philological learning has been greater than hers. She converses readily in French, Italian, German, Polish, Swedish, and Hungarian, and is familiar with twenty modern dialects,

besides the Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Persic, and Arabic. Mrs. Putnam made the first translation into English of Frederica Bremer's novel of the "Neighbors," from the Swedish. The translation by Mary Howitt was made from the German.

The maternal ancestors of Lowell were of Danish origin, and emigrated to America from Kirkwall, in the Orkneys. While Dr. Lowell was in Scotland with his family, they went to the Orkneys to visit the burial-place of his wife's forefathers, and while there she met a cousin, a native of England, whom she had never before seen, who had been many years in India, and on his return to his native land, had gone, like her, on a pious pilgrimage to visit the graves of his ancestors.

Among all the authors whose homes are noticed in this volume, Lowell is the only one who has the fortune to reside in the house in which he was born. It is a happiness which few Americans of mature age can know. But Lowell has been peculiarly happy in his domestic relations; Nature has endowed him with a vigorous constitution and a healthy and happy temperament; and, but for the loss of his three children, the youngest of whom, his only boy, died recently in Rome, there would have been fewer shadows on his path than have fallen to the lot of other poets. A nature like his can make its own sunshine, and find an oasis in every desert; yet it was a rare fortune that he found himself in such a home as his imagination would have created for him, if he had been cast homeless upon the world. He loves to throw a purple light over the familiar scene, and to invest it with a superfluousness of grateful gilding. The large-hearted love to give, whether their gifts be needed or not. The lovely

landscape around Elmwood looks still lovelier in his verse than to the unaided vision; and the "dear marshes" through which the briny Charles ebbs and flows, are pleasanter for being seen through the golden haze of the Poet's affection,

"Below, the Charles — a stripe of nether sky,
Now hid by rounded apple-trees between,
Whose gaps the misplaced sail sweeps bellying by,
Now flickering golden through a woodland screen,
Then spreading out, at his next turn beyond,
A silver circle, like an inland pond —
Slips seaward silently through marshes purple and green.

"Dear marshes! vain to him the gift of sight
Who cannot in their various incomes share,
From every season drawn, of shade and light,
Who sees in them but levels brown and bare;
Each change of storm or sunshine scatters free
On them its largess of variety,
For Nature with cheap means still works her wonders rare.

"In spring they lie one broad expanse of green,
O'er which the light winds run with glimmering feet;
Here, yellower stripes track out the creek unseen,
There, darker growths o'er hidden ditches meet;
And purpler stains show where the blossoms crowd,
As if the silent shadow of a cloud
Hung there becalmed, with the next breath to fleet.

"All round, upon the river's slippery edge,
Witching to deeper calm the drowsy tide,
Whispers and leans the breeze-entangling sedge;
Through emerald glooms the lingering waters slide,
Or, sometimes wavering, throw back the sun,
And the stiff banks in eddies melt and run
Of dimpling light, and with the current seem to glide."

Elmwood is half a mile or so beyond the colleges, and lies off from the main street; the approach to it is through a pleasant green lane, or at least it was green when we last saw it, the trees having been freshly washed of their "brown dust" by a shower which was still falling, and the muddy division of the year having apparently just commenced. The house is so surrounded with trees that you catch but a glimpse of it until you stand opposite to it. Though built of wood, and nearly a century old, it shows no signs of decay. It is most appropriately furnished, and contains many interesting relics, old family pictures, and some choice works of art, among which are two busts by Powers and two or three portraits by Page, among the finest he has painted. Perhaps it may be gratifying to the reader to know that the Poet's study, in which nearly all his poems have been written, is on the third floor, in that far corner of the house on which, in the engraving, the light falls so pleasantly.

Lowell is generally looked upon as a serious poet, and, indeed, no one has a better claim to be so regarded, for seriousness is one of the first essentials of all genuine poetry. But seriousness is not necessarily sadness. Much of his poetry overflows with mirthful and jocund feelings, and, in his most pungent satire there is a constant bubbling up of a genial and loving nature; the brilliant flashes of his wit are softened by an evident gentleness of motive. He is the first of our poets who has succeeded in making our harsh and uncouth Yankee dialect subservient to the uses of poetry; this he has done with entire success in that admirable piece of humorous satire, "The Biglow Papers." No productions

of a similar character, in this country, were ever half so popular as the pithy verses of Hosea Biglow, in spite of their being so strongly imbued with a trenchant spirit of opposition to the popular political views of the multitude; and many of them have been widely circulated by the newspapers without any intimation being given of their origin. We were sitting one evening in the bar-room of a hotel in Washington, just after the election of General Taylor, when our political metropolis was filled with office-seekers from all parts of the country; the room was crowded with rude men who were discussing political matters, and the last thing we could have looked for was a harangue on American poetry. A roughly-dressed down-easter, or at least he had the accent and look of one, came into the bar-room, and addressing himself to a knot of men who appeared to know him, exclaimed, "Who says there are no American poets?" And he looked around upon the company, as though he would be rather pleased than otherwise to encounter an antagonist.

But nobody seemed disposed to venture such an assertion; the novelty of the question, however, attracted the attention of the people near him, which was probably all he wanted. "Well," continued the speaker, with an air of defiant confidence, "if any body says so, I am prepared to dispute him. I have found an American poet. I don't know who he is, nor where he lives, but he is the author of these lines, and he is a poet." He took a newspaper from his pocket and read what Parson Wilbur, in the "Biglow Papers," calls a New England "pastoral:"—

THE COURTIN'.

"Zekle crep' up, quite unbeknown,
An' peeked in thru the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'ith no one nigh to hender.

"Agin' the chimbly crooknecks hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's arm thet gran'ther Young
Fetched back from Concord busted.

"The wannut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her!
An' leetle fires danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

"The very room, coz she was in,
Looked warm frum floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full as rosy agin
Ez th' apples she wus peelin'.

"She heerd a foot an' knowed it, tu,
Araspin' on the scraper, —
All ways to once her feelins flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

"He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
Some doubtfle o' the seekle;
His heart kep' goin' pitypat,
But hern went pity Zekle."

The Yankee read it with proper emphasis and an unctuous twang, and all the company agreed with him, that it was genuine poetry "and no mistake."

And so poetry makes its way in the crowd. If it have

the true spirit in it, it will find a sure response in the great heart of the multitude, who are, after all, the only judges in art. There is no appeal from their decisions. And, in the case of Lowell, the decision was unmistakably in his favor. He is acknowledged as one of the poets of the people. There are none of our poets whose short pieces we find more frequently in the corners of newspapers, although they are but rarely attributed to their author.

Lowell's prose writings are as remarkable as his poetry; the copiousness of his illustrations, the richness of his imagery, the easy flow of his sentences, the keenness of his wit, and the force and clearness of his reasoning, give to his reviews and essays a fascinating charm that would place him in the front rank of our prose writers, if he did occupy a similar position among our poets. He has written considerably for the North American Review, and some other periodicals, but the only volume of prose which he has published, besides the "Biglow Papers," was the "Conversations on the Old Dramatists," which appeared in 1849.

Lowell is naturally a politician, but we do not imagine he will ever be elected a member of Congress, as his grandfather was. He is such a politician as Milton was, and will never narrow himself down to any other party than one which includes all mankind within its "lines;" but he cannot shut his eyes to the great movements of the day, and dally with his Muse, when he can invoke her aid in the cause of the oppressed and suffering. He has to contend with the disadvantages of a reputation for abolitionism, which is as unfavorable to the prospects of a poet as of a politician; but his abolitionism is of a very different

type from that which has made so great a commotion among us during the last ten or fifteen years. Notwithstanding the unpopular imputation which rests upon his name, it does not appear to have made him enemies in the South. Some of his warmest and most attached friends are residents of slave States and are slave-holders; and one of the heartiest and most appreciative criticisms on his writings that have appeared in this country was published in a Southern journal, a paper which can hardly be suspected of giving aid and encouragement to an enemy of the South.



"Here comes Poe with his raven like Barnaby Rudge,
Three fifths of him genius & two fifths sheer fudge,
Who talks like a book of iambs & pentameters,
In a way to make people of common sense damn metres,
Who has written some things quite the best of their kind,
But the heart in 'em is wholly squeez'd out by the mind,
Who — but hey-dey! what's this? Mysterious Mathews & Poe
You must n't fling mudballs at Longfellow so,
Does it make a man worse that his character's such
As to make his friends love him (as you think) too much?
Why, there is not a bard at this moment alive
More willing than he that his fellows should thrive;
While you are abusing him thus, even now
He would help either one of you out of a slough,
You may say that he's smooth & that till you're hoarse,
But remember that elegance also is force;
After polishing granite as much as you will,
The heart keeps its tough old persisting style,

S. Rhoads

Phil., Feb. 10th, 1848.

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141
H6

Homes of American authors

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